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P O P E's
ODYSSEY.

VOL. IV.

A

G E O R G E R.

GEORGE, by the Grace of God, King of *Great Britain, France and Ireland*, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting: Whereas *Bernard Lintot* of Our City of *London*, Bookseller, hath by his Petition humbly represented unto Us, that he is now Printing a Translation, undertaken by Our Trusty and Well-beloved *Alexander Pope*, Esq; of the *Odyssey* of *Homer* from the *Greek*, in Five Volumes in *Folio* upon large and small Paper, in Quarto upon Royal Paper, in *Octavo* and *Duodecimo*, with large Notes upon each Book, and that he has been at great Expence in carrying on the said Work, and the sole Right and Title of the Copy of the same being vested in the said *Bernard Lintot*, he has humbly besought Us to grant him Our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing thereof for the term of fourteen Years: We are therefore graciously pleased to gratify him in his Request, and do by these Presents, agreeable to the Statute in that behalf made and provided, for Us, Our Heirs and Successors, give and grant unto him the said *Bernard Lintot*, his Executors, Administrators and Assigns, Our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing of the said Translation of the *Odyssey* of *Homer*, for and during the term of fourteen Years, to be computed from the Day of the Date hereof. Strictly forbidding and prohibiting all Our Subjects within Our Kingdoms of *Great Britain and Ireland*, and other Our Dominions, to reprint or abridge the same, either in the like, or any other Volume or Volumes whatsoever, or to import, buy, vend, utter or distribute any Copies of the same or any part thereof Reprinted beyond the Seas, within the said Term of fourteen Years, without the Consent or Approbation of the said *Bernard Lintot*, his Heirs, Executors and Assigns, by Writing under his or their Hands and Seals first had and obtained, as they and every of them offending herein will answer the contrary at their Perils. Whereof the Master, Wardens, and Company of *Stationers* of Our City of *London*, the Commissioners and other Officers of Our Customs, and all other Our Officers and Ministers whom it may concern are to take Notice, that due Obedience be given to Our Pleasure herein signified. Given at Our Court at *St. James's* the Nineteenth Day of *February* 1724-5. In the Eleventh Year of our Reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

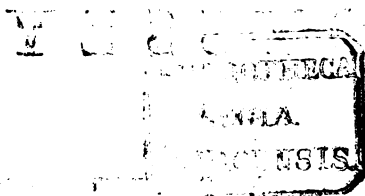
THE
ODYSSEY
OF
HOMER.

Translated from the *GREEK*.

VOL. IV.



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MDCCXXVI.





*Telemachus departs from Lacedaemon in a chariot
with the Son of Nestor having received great
presents from Menelaus.*

P. Fourdrinier. Scul.

THE
FIFTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

A 3

The



The A R G U M E N T.

The Return of Telemachus.

The Goddess Minerva commands Telemachus in a Vision to return to Ithaca. Pisistratus and he take leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylos, where they part; and Telemachus sets sail, after having received on board Theoclymenus the Soothsayer, The Scene then changes to the Cottage of Eumæus, who entertains Ulysses with a recital of his adventures. In the mean time Telemachus arrives on the Coast, and sending the vessel to the town, proceeds by himself to the lodge of Eumæus.

THE

THE
FIFTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

NOW had *Minerva* reach'd those ample plains,
Fam'd for the dance, where *Menelaus* reigns;
Anxious she flies to great *Ulysses'* heir,
His instant voyage challeng'd all her care.

Beneath

NOTES.

Neither this book, nor indeed some of the following, are to be reckon'd among the most shining parts of the *Odyssey*. They are narrative, and generally low; yet natural, and just enough, considering *Homer* was resolv'd to describe and follow low life so very minutely. This great Poet here resembles an evening Sun; he has not the same heat or brightness; there are several little clouds about him, tho' in some places gilded and adorn'd: however, to make us amends, he breaks out again before the conclusion of his course, and sets at last in glory.

A 4

There

8 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book XV.

5 Beneath the royal Portico display'd,
With Nestor's Son, Telemachus was lay'd;

In

There is no doubt, but all the parts of a Poem are not capable of equal lustre; nay, they ought not to dazzle us alike, or tire us by a perpetual strain upon the imagination. But in these cooler relations a Translator has a hard task: He is expected to *shine*, where the Author is *not bright*: and the unreasonable Critic demands a Copy more noble than the Original. 'Tis true, these are the passages of which he ought to take particular care, and to set them off to the best advantage: But however he may polish a vulgar stone, it will still remain its inherent degree of cloudiness; and the man is ignorant indeed, who thinks one can make it a Diamond.

The story now turns to *Telemachus*, and the Poet briefly describes his voyage to his country: There is a necessity to be concise, for the Heroe of an Epic Poem is never to be out of sight, after his introduction. The little time that *Homer* employs in the return of *Telemachus* is not spent unusefully by *Ulysses*; during this interval, he learns the state of his publick and domestick affairs from *Eumens*, and prepares the way for the destruction of the Suitors, the chief design of the whole *Odyssey*. There is another reason why the Poet ought not to dwell at large upon the story of *Telemachus*; he bears but an incidental relation to the *Odyssey*, and consequently *Homer* was necessitated to pass over his actions with brevity, that he might describe the Heroe of his Poem at full length. It has been objected, that no mention has been made of any action at all of *Telemachus* during his whole stay with *Menelaus*, and that he lies there idly, without making his voyage contribute any thing to the restitution of *Ulysses*; but from the former observation it is evident, that this silence in the Poet proceeds from judgment; nothing is to be inserted in an Epic Poem but what has some affinity with the main design of it: but what affinity could the actions of *Telemachus* in the *Spartan* court have with those of *Ulysses*? This would have been to make two Heroes in one Poem, and would have broken the unity of the action; whereas by the contrary conduct *Homer* unites the two stories, and makes the voyage of *Telemachus* subservient to the chief action; namely, the restitution of *Ulysses*. *Telemachus* undertakes a voyage to make enquiry after *Ulysses*; this the Poet fully describes, because it has an immediate relation to *Ulysses*; but passes over all other adventures during the absence of *Telemachus*, because they have no relation to the design. I know

In sleep profound the Son of *Nestor* lies;
Not thine, *Ulysses*! Care unscal'd his eyes:

Restless

I know it has been objected, that the whole story of *Telemachus* is foreign to the *Odyssey*, and that the four first books have not a sufficient connection with the rest of the Poem, and therefore that there is a double action: But this objection will cease, if it be made appear, that this voyage contributes to the restoration of *Ulysses*; for whatever incident has such an effect is united to the subject, and essential to it. Now that this voyage has such an effect is very evident; the suitors were ready to seize the throne of *Ulysses*, and compel his wife to marry; but by this voyage *Telemachus* breaks their whole designs. Instead of usurping the throne, they are obliged to defend themselves: they defer their purpose, and waste much time in endeavouring to intercept him in his return. By this method leisure is gain'd from the violence and addresses of the suitors, till *Ulysses* returns and brings about his own re-establishment. This voyage therefore is the secret source from which all the happiness of *Ulysses* flows: for had not *Telemachus* sail'd to *Pyle*, *Penelope* must have been compell'd to marry, and the throne of *Ulysses* usurped. I have been more large upon this objection, because many foreign Critics lay great weight upon it. See Note XIX on the first book.

There has lately been a great dispute amongst the *French*, concerning the length of the stay of *Telemachus* from his country. The debate is not very material, nor is it very difficult to settle that point. *Telemachus* sail'd from *Ithaca* in the evening of the second day, and returns to it on the thirty eighth in the morning, so that he is absent thirty five days completely.

v. 1. Now had *Minerva*, &c.] If this had been related by an Historian, he would have only said that *Telemachus* judg'd it necessary for his affairs to sail back to his own country; but a Poet steps out of the common beaten road, ascribes the wisdom of that Heroe to the Goddess of it, and introduces her in person, to give a dignity to his Poetry.

The Reader may consult in general the extracts from *Bossu*, (plac'd before the *Odyssey*) concerning machines, or the interposition of Deities in Epic Poetry. I will here beg leave to set them in a different and more particular light.

It has been imagin'd that a Deity is never to be introduc'd but when all human means are ineffectual: If this were true, *Minerva* would be in vain employ'd in bringing *Telemachus* back, when

B 5

a common

10 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XV.

Restless he griev'd, with various fears oppress,

10 And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breast.

When,

a common Messenger might have answer'd that purpose as well as the Goddess. I doubt not but the verse of *Horace* has led many into this error;

Nec Deus interfit nisi dignus vindice nodus.

This rule is to be apply'd only to the Theater, of which *Horace* there speaks, and means no more, than when the knot of the Play is to be untied, and no other way is left for making the discovery, then let a God descend and clear the intricacy to the Auditors. But, as *Mr. Dryden* observes, it has no relation to Epic Poetry.

It is true, that a Deity is never to be introduc'd upon little and unworthy occasions; the very design of Machines is to add weight and dignity to the story, and consequently an unworthy employment defeats the very intent of them, and debases the Deities by making them act in offices unworthy of the characters of divine personages: But then it is as true, that a Poet is at liberty to use them for ornament as well as necessity. For instance, both *Virgil* and *Homer* in their descriptions of storms introduce Deities, *Nephtune* and *Æolus*, only to fill our minds with grandeur and terror; for in reality a storm might have happen'd without a miracle, and *Æneas* and *Ulysses* both have been driven upon unknown shores, by a common storm as well as by immediate interposition of *Nephtune* or *Æolus*. But machines have a very happy effect; the Poet seems to converse with Gods, gives signs of a divine transport, and distinguishes his Poem in all parts from an History.

v. 5. Beneath the royal Portico, &c.] *Minerva* here finds *Telemachus* in bed: It is necessary to remember that *Ulysses* landed in *Ithaca* in the morning of the thirty fifth day; and when *Minerva* left him, she went to the *Spartan* court to *Telemachus*; this vision therefore appears to that Heroe in the night following the thirty fifth day. On the thirty sixth he departs from *Menelaus*, and lodges that night with *Diocles*; on the thirty seventh he embarks towards the evening, sails all night, and lands on the thirty eighth in the morning in his own country. From this observation it is likewise evident, that *Ulysses* passes two days in discourse with *Æneas*, tho' the Poet only distinguishes the time by the voyage of *Telemachus*; for the preceding book concludes with the thirty fifth day, and *Telemachus* spends the thirty sixth and thirty seventh and

Book XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 11

When, O *Telemachus*! (the Goddess said)
 Too long in vain, too widely hast thou stray'd.
 Thus leaving careless thy paternal right
 The robbers prize, the prey to lawless might.
 15 On fond pursuits neglectful while you roam,
 Ev'n now, the hand of Rapine sacks the dome.
 Hence to *Atrides*; and his leave implore
 To launch thy vessel for thy natal shore:
 Fly, whilst thy Mother virtuous yet withstands
 20 Her kindred's wishes, and her Sire's commands;
 Thro'

and the following night in his return, and meets *Ulysses* in the morning of the thirty eighth day. This remark is necessary to avoid confusion, and to make the two stories of *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* coincide, in this and the next book of the *Odyssey*.

v. 20. *Her kindred's wishes, and her Sire's commands.*] Ovid had these lines in his view in his Epistle of *Penelope* to *Ulysses*.

*Me pater Icarus viduo decedere lecto
 Cogit, & immensas increpat usque moras.*

But why should *Minerva* make use of these arguments, to persuade *Telemachus* to return immediately; and give him no information concerning the safety of *Ulysses*, who was now actually landed in his own country? The Poet reserves this discovery to be made in the future part of the story: If *Telemachus* had known of his father's being already return'd, there could have been no room for the beautiful interview between the father and the son; for the doubts and fears, the surprize and filial tenderness, on the part of *Telemachus*; and for the paternal fondness, the yearnings of nature, and the transports of joy, on the part of *Ulysses*. *Aristotle* particularly commends this conduct of *Homer* with respect to *Ulysses*. These disguises and concealments, (says that Author) perplex the fable with agreeable plots and intricacies, surprize us with a variety of incidents, and give room for the relation of many

Thro' both, *Euryrackus* pursues the dame;

And with the noblest gifts asserts his claim.

Hence therefore, while thy stores thy own remain;

Thou know'st the practice of their female train.

25 Lost in the children of the present spouse

They slight the pledges of the former vows.

Their love is always with the lover past;

Still the succeeding flame expells the last.

Let o'er thy house some chosen maid preside,

30 Till heav'n decrees to bless thee in a bride.

ny adventures; while *Ulysses* still appears in assum'd characters, and upon every occasion recites a new History. At the same time the Poet excellently sustains his character, which is every where distinguish'd by a wise and ready dissimulation.

v. 24. *Thou know'st the practice of the female train.*] This is not spoken in derogation of *Penelope*, nor apply'd to her in particular; it is laid down as an universal maxim, and utter'd by the Goddess of wisdom: But (says *Madam Dacier*) I wish the Poet had told us, if the husbands in his days had better memories toward their departed wives? But what advantage would this be to the fair sex, if we allow that an husband may possibly forget a former wife? I chuse rather to congratulate the modern Ladies, against whom there is not the least objection of this nature. Is it not evident, that all our widows are utterly disconsolate, appear many months in deep mourning? and whenever they are prevail'd upon to a second marriage, do they not chuse out the strongest, best built, and most vigorous youth of the nation? For what other reason, but that such constitutions may be a security against their ever feeling the like calamity again? What I have here said shews that the world is well chang'd since the times of *Homer*; and however the race of man is dwindled and decayed since those ages, yet it is a demonstration that the modern Ladies are not to blame for it.

But

Book XV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 13

But now thy more attentive ears incline,

Observe the warnings of a pow'r divine:

For thee their saares the Sutor Lords shall lay

In *Samos* sands, or freights of *Ithaca*,

35 To seize thy life shall lurk the murd'rous band,

Ere yet thy footsteps press thy native land.

No——— sooner far their riot and their lust

All-cov'ring earth shall bury deep in dust!

Then distant from the scatter'd Islands steer,

40 Nor let the night retard thy full career;

Thy heav'nly guardian shall instruct the gales

To smoothe thy passage, and supply thy sails:

And when at *Ithaca* thy labour ends,

Send to the town thy vessel with thy friends,

45 But seek thou first the Master of the swine,

(For still to thee his loyal thoughts incline)

There pass the night; while he his course pursues

To bring *Penelope* the wish'd-for news,

That thou safe sailing from the *Pylian* strand

50 Art come to bless her in thy native land.

Thus spoke the Goddess, and resum'd her flight

To the pure regions of eternal light.

Mean-while *Pisistratus* he gently shakes,

And with these words the slumb'ring youth awakes.

Rise,

14 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XV.*

55 Rise, son of *Nestor*! for the road prepare,
And join the harness'd couriers to the car.

What cause, he cry'd, can justify our flight,
To tempt the dangers of forbidding night?
Here wait we rather, till approaching day

60 Shall prompt our speed, and point the ready way.

Nor think of flight before the *Spartan* King
Shall bid farewell, and bounteous presents bring;
Gifts, which to distant ages safely stor'd,
The sacred act of friendship shall record.

65 Thus he. But when the dawn bestreak'd the East,
The King from *Helen* rose, and sought his guest.
As soon as his approach the Heroe knew,
The splendid mantle round him first he threw,
Then o'er his ample shoulders whirl'd the cloak,

70 Respectful met the Monarch, and bespoke.

Hail, great *Atrides*, favour'd of high *Jove*!
Let not thy Friends in vain for licence move.
Swift let us measure back the wat'ry way,
Nor check our speed, impatient of delay.

75 If with desire so strong thy bosom glows,
Ill, said the King, shou'd I thy wish oppose;
For oft in others freely I reprove
The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love;

Who

- Who love too much, hate in the like extrem,
 80 And both the golden Mean alike condemn:
 Alike he thwarts the hospitable end,
 Who drives the free, or stays the hasty friend;
 True friendship's laws are by this rule express,
 Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.
 85 Yet stay, my friends, and in your chariot take
 The noblest presents that our love can make:
 Mean-time commit we to our women's care
 Some choice domestic viands to prepare;
 The traveller rising from the banquet gay,
 90 Eludes the labours of the tedious way.
 Then if a wider course shall rather please
 Thro' spacious *Argos*, and the Realms of *Greece*,
Atrides in his chariot shall attend,
 Himself thy convoy to each royal friend.

v. 84. *Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.*] *Homer* has here laid together admirable precepts for social life; the passage was much admir'd; *Herodotus* borrow'd it, as we are inform'd by *Enslathius*.

———τραπίζῃ
 Μυλίζαντ' ἀπόπιμψαι ἑπὰν ἰθίλοι νίσσῃσιν.

But perhaps *Enslathius* quoted by memory, or thro' inadvertency wrote down *Herodotus* for *Theocritus*, in whom these lines are to be found:

Μινδὲ ξυνόδον κακὸν ἱρμεναί, ἀλλὰ τραπίζῃ
 Μυλίζαντ' ἀπόπιμψαι, ἑπὰν ἰθίλωντι νίσσῃσιν.

No

95 No Prince will let *Ulysses*' hair remove

Without some pledge, some monument of love:

These will the Chaldron, these the Tripod give,

From those the well-pair'd mules we shall receive,

Or bowl emboss'd whose golden figures live.

100 To whom the Youth, for prudence fam'd, reply'd.

O Monarch, care of heav'n! thy people's pride!

No friend in *Ithaca* my place supplies,

No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful eyes:

My stores expos'd and fenceless house demand

105 The speediest succours from my guardian hand;

Left in a search too anxious and too vain.

Of one lost joy, I lose what yet remain.

His purpose when the gen'rous warrior heard,

He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.

Now

v. 109. *He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.*] It is in the original, *He commanded Helen and her maids to do it*. The moderns have blam'd *Menelaus* for want of delicacy, in commanding his Queen to perform such household offices. I read such passages with pleasure, because they are exact pictures of antient life: We may as well condemn the first inhabitants of the world for want of politeness, in living in tents and bowers, and not in palaces. This command of *Menelaus* agrees with those manners, and with the patriarchal life. *Gen. xviii. 6. Abraham hasten'd into his tent, and said unto Sarah his wife, make ready quickly threemeasures of fine meal: Knead it, and makes cakes upon the hearth.*

I doubt not but the continual descriptions of entertainments have likewise given offence to many; but we may be in some degree reconcil'd to them, if we consider they are not only instances

- 110 Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home,
 Was *Boethoëdes Egeonous* come;
 Swift as the word he forms the rising blaze,
 And o'er the coals the smoking fragments lays.
 Mean-time the King, his Son, and *Helen*, went
 115 Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a costly scent.
 The King selected from the glitt'ring rows
 A bowl; the Prince a silver beaker chose.
 The beauteous Queen revolv'd with careful eyes
 Her various textures of unnumber'd dies,
 120 And chose the largest; with no vulgar art
 Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part:
 Beneath the rest it lay divinely bright,
 Like radiant *Hesper* o'er the gems of night.

Then

ces of the hospitality of the ancients, but of their piety and religion: Every meal was a religious act, a sacrifice, or a feast of thanksgiving: libations of wine, and offerings of part of the flesh were constantly made at every entertainment. This gives a dignity to the description, and when we read it, we are not to consider it as an act merely of eating or drinking, but as an office of worship to the Gods.

This is a note of the Critics; but perhaps the same thing might as well be said of our modern entertainments, wherever the good practice of saying *Grace* before and after meat is not yet laid aside.

v. 123. *Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.*] If this passage were translated literally, it would stand thus, *Helen chose a vesture of most beautiful embroidery, and of the largest extent, a vesture that lay beneath the rest.* We are to understand by the last circumstance, that this vesture was the choicest of her wardrobe,
 it

18 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XV.

Then with each gift they hasten'd to their guest,

125 And thus the King *Ulysses*' heir address.

Since fix'd are thy resolves, may thund'ring *Jove*
With happiest omens thy desires approve!

This silver bowl, whose costly margins shine
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine;

130 To me this present, of *Vulcanian* frame,

From *Sidon's* hospitable Monarch came;

To thee we now consign the precious load,

The pride of Kings, and labour of a God.

Then gave the cup; while *Megapente* brought

135 The silver vase with living sculpture wrought.

The beauteous Queen, advancing next, display'd

The shining veil, and thus endearing said.

Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,

Long since, in better days, by *Helen* wove:

it being repositèd with the greatest care, or *μεγαλὴ ἀλγύη*. The verses are taken from lib. 6. of the *Iliad*. This robe was the work of *Helen's* own hands; an instance that in those days a great Lady, or a great Beauty, might be a good work-woman; And she here seems to take particular care to obviate an opinion one might otherwise have, that she did not apply herself to these works till her best days were past. We are told in the *Iliad*,

Her in the Palace, at her loom she found,

The golden web her own sad story crown'd;

The Trojan wars she weav'd, her self the prize,

And the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.

Safe

140 Safe in thy mother's care the vesture lay,
 To deck thy bride, and grace thy nuptial day.
 Mean-time may'st thou with happiest speed regain
 Thy stately palace, and thy wide domain.

She said, and gave the veil; with grateful look

145 The Prince the variegated present took.
 And now, when thro' the royal dome they pass'd,
 High on a throne the King each stranger plac'd.
 A golden ew'r th' attendant damsel brings,
 Replete with water from the crystal springs;

150 With copious streams the shining vase supplies
 A silver laver of capacious size.
 They wash. The tables in fair order spread,
 The glitt'ring canisters are crown'd with bread;
 Viands of various kinds allure the taste

155 Of choicest sort and savour, rich repast!
 Whilst *Eteoneus* portions out the shares,
Atrides' son the purple draught prepares.
 And now (each sated with the genial feast,
 And the short rage of thirst and hunger ceas'd)

160 *Ulysses'* son, with his illustrious friend,
 The horses join, the polish'd car ascend.
 Along the court the fiery steeds rebound,
 And the wide portal echoes to the sound.

The

The king precedes; a bowl with fragrant wine
 165 (Libation destin'd to the Pow'rs divine)
 His right-hand held: before the Gods he stands,
 Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters these commands.
 Farewel and prosper, youths! let Nestor know
 What grateful thoughts still in this bosom glow,
 170 For all the proofs of his paternal care,
 Thro' the long dangers of the ten-years war.
 Ah! doubt not our report (the Prince rejoin'd)
 Of all the virtues of thy generous mind.
 And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet?
 175 To him thy presents shew, thy words repeat:

v. 174. *And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet! &c.* It is not impossible but a false reading may have crept into the text in this verse. In the present edition it stands thus.

————— αὖ γὰρ ἴδωρ ὅς
 Νόστος, Ἰθάκῃ δὲ κληῖ, Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐν ἑσπερῇ
 "Εἴποιμι". —————

The sense will be less intricate, and the construction more easy, if instead of κληῖ, we insert κληῖν, and read the line thus pointed.

Νόστος Ἰθάκῃ δὲ, κληῖν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐν ἑσπερῇ
 "Εἴποιμι". —————

Then the verse will have this import, "O may I, upon my return to Ithaca, finding Ulysses in his Palace, give him an account of your friendship!" Whereas in the common editions there is a tautology, and either κληῖ or νόστος must be allowed to be a superfluity.

How

How will each speech his grateful wonder raise?

How will each gift indulge us in thy praise?

Scarce ended thus the Prince, when on the right
Advanc'd the bird of *Jove*: auspicious sight!

180 A milkwhite fowl his clinching talons bore,

With care domestic pamper'd at the floor.

Peasants in vain with threatening cries pursue,

In solemn speed the bird majestic flew

Full dexter to the car: the prosp'rous fight

185 Fill'd ev'ry breast with wonder and delight.

But *Nestor's* son the chearful silence broke,

And in these words the *Spartan* chief bespoke.

Say if to us the Gods these Omens send,

Or fates peculiar to thy self portend?

190 Whilst yet the Monarch paus'd, with doubts oppress'd,

The beauteous Queen reliev'd his lab'ring breast.

Hear me, she cry'd, to whom the Gods have giv'n

To read this sign, and mystick sense of heav'n.

As

v. 192. *Hear me, (she cry'd) &c.*] It is not clear why the Poet ascribes a greater quickness and penetration to *Helen* in the solution of this prodigy, than to *Menelaus*. Is it, as *Eusebius* asserts, from a superior acuteness of nature and presence of mind in the fair sex? Or is it, that *Helen* in this resembles some modern beauties, who (tho' their husbands be ask'd the question) will make the answer themselves? I would willingly believe that *Helen* might happen to stand in such a position, as to be able to make more minute observations upon the flight of the eagle, than *Menelaus*;

As thus the plummy sov'reign of the air

195 Left on the mountain's brow his callow care,

And wander'd thro' the wide ethereal way

To pour his wrath on yon luxurious prey;

So shall thy god-like father, toss'd in vain

Thro' all the dangers of the boundless main,

200 Arrive, (or is perchance already come)

From slaughter'd gluttons to release the dome.

Oh! if this promis'd bliss by thund'ring Jove,

(The Prince reply'd) stand fix'd in fate above;

melans; and being more circumstantial in the observation, she might for that reason be more ready and circumstantial in the interpretation. But *Homér* himself tells us, that she receiv'd it from the Gods. This is a pious lesson, to teach us in general that all knowledge is the gift of God, and perhaps here particularly inserted to raise the character of *Helen*, and make us less surpriz'd to see her forgiven by *Menelaws*, when she is not only pardon'd, but favour'd thus with inspiration. And indeed it was necessary to reconcile us to this fatal Beauty; at whom the Reader is naturally enough offended: She is an actress in many of the scenes of the *Odyssey*, and consequently to be redeem'd from contempt: This is done by degrees; the Poet steals away the adulteress from our view, to set before us the amiable penitent.

v. 194. *As thus the plummy sov'reign, &c.*] *Ulysses* is the eagle, the bird represents the suitors: the cries of the men and women when the eagle seiz'd his prey, denote the lamentations of the relations of the suitors, who are slain by *Ulysses*. The circumstance of the flight of the eagle close to the horses, is added to shew that the prodigy had a fix'd and certain reference to a person present; namely *Telemachus*: The eagle comes suddenly from a mountain; this means that *Ulysses* shall unexpectedly arrive from the country to the suitors destruction. The fowl is said to be fed by the family, this is a full designation of the suitors, who feed upon *Ulysses*, and prey upon his family. And as this bird is kill'd by the talons of the eagle, so the suitors fall by the spear of *Ulysses*. *Enslathins*.

To

To thee, as to some God, I'll temples raise,
 205 And crown thy altars with the costly blaze.

He said; and bending o'er his chariot, flung
 Athwart the fiery steeds the smarting thong;
 The bounding shafts upon the harness play,
 'Till night descending intercepts the way.

210 To *Diocles*, at *Phara*, they repair,
 Whose boasted Sire was sacred *Alpheus'* heir;
 With him all night the youthful strangers stay'd,
 Nor found the hospitable rites unpay'd.
 But soon as morning from her orient bed

215 Had ting'd the mountains with her earliest red,
 They join'd the steeds and on the chariot sprung;
 The brazen portals in their passage rung.

To *Pylos* soon they came; when thus begun
 To *Nestor's* heir *Ulysses'* god-like son:

220 Let not *Pisistratus* in vain be prest,
 Nor unconsenting hear his friend's request;
 His friend by long hereditary claim,
 In toils his equal, and in years the same.
 No farther from our vessel, I implore;

225 The coursers drive; but lash them to the shore.

Too

Too long thy father would his friend detain;
I dread his proffer'd kindness, urg'd in vain.

The Heroe paus'd, and ponder'd this request,
While love and duty warr'd within his breast.

230 At length resolv'd, he turn'd his ready hand,
And lash'd his panting coursers to the strand.
There, while within the poop with care he stor'd
The regal presents of the Spartan Lord;
With speed be gone, (said he) call ev'ry mate,

235 Ere yet to Nestor I the tale relate :

v. 226. *Too long thy father would his friend detain.*] This has been objected against, as contrary to the promise of *Telemachus*, who assur'd *Menelaus* that he would acquaint Nestor with his great friendship and hospitality; Is he therefore not guilty of falshood, by embarking immediately without fulfilling his promise? *Estiathius* answers, that the prodigy of the eagle occasions this alteration, and that the not fulfilling his promise is to be ascrib'd to accident and necessity. But the words of *Telemachus* sufficiently justify his veracity; they are of the plural number *καταλιέμεν*, *I and Pisistratus will inform Nestor of your hospitality*: This promise he leaves to be perform'd by *Pisistratus*, who returns directly to Nestor. Others blame *Telemachus* as unpolite, in leaving Nestor without any acknowledgment for his civilities. *Dacier* has recourse to the command of *Minerva*, and to the prodigy of the eagle, for his vindication: He is commanded by the Gods to return immediately, and therefore not blameable for complying with their injunctions. But perhaps it is a better reason to say, that the nature of the Poem requires such a conduct; the action of the *Odyssey* stands still till the return of *Telemachus* (whatever happens to him in *Pyle* being foreign to it) and therefore *Homer* shews his judgment, in precipitating the actions of *Telemachus*, rather than trifling away the time, while the story sleeps, only to shew a piece of complaisance and ceremony.

'Tis

'Tis true, the fervor of his gen'rous heart
 Brooks no repulse, nor could'st thou soon depart:
 Himself will seek thee here, nor wilt thou find,
 In words alone, the *Pylian* Monarch kind.

240 But when arriv'd he thy return shall know,
 How will his breast with honest fury glow?
 This said, the sounding strokes his horses fire,
 And soon he reach'd the Palace of his Sire.

Now, (cry'd *Telemachus*) with speedy care
 245 Hoise ev'ry sail, and ev'ry oar prepare.
 Swift as the word his willing mates obey,
 And seize their seats, impatient for the sea.

Mean-time the Prince with sacrifice adores
Minerva, and her guardian aid implores;
 250 When lo! a wretch ran breathless to the shore,
 New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.
 A Seer he was, from great *Melampus* sprung,
Melampus, who in *Pylus* flourish'd long.

'Till

v. 252. ———— *From great Melampus sprung.*] There is some obscurity in this genealogical History. *Melampus* was a prophet, he liv'd in *Pylus*, and was a person of great wealth; his uncle *Nelus* seiz'd his riches, and detain'd them a whole year, to oblige him to recover his herds detain'd by *Iphycus* in *Phylace*; he fail'd in the attempt, and was kept in prison by *Iphycus*, the son of *Phylacus*. *Bias*, the brother of *Melampus*, was in love with *Pero* the daughter of *Nelus*; *Nelus*, to engage *Melampus* more strongly in the enterprize, promises to give *Pero* in marriage to his

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B

his

- 'Till uig'd by wrongs a foreign realm he chose,
 255 Far from the hateful cause of all his woes.
Neleus his treasures one long year detains;
 As long, he groan'd in *Phylacus* his chains:
 Mean-time, what anguish and what rage combin'd,
 For lovely *Pero* rack'd his lab'ring mind!
 260 Yet 'scap'd he death; and vengeful of his wrong
 To *Pylas* drove the lowing herds along:
 Then (*Neleus* vanquish'd, and consign'd the Fair
 To *Bias*' arms) he fought a foreign air;
Argos the rich for his retreat he chose,
 265 There form'd his empire; there his palace rose.
 From him *Antiphates* and *Mantius* came:
 The first begot *Oicleus* great in fame,
 And he *Amphiaraus*, immortal name!

his brother *Bias*, upon the recovery of his herds from *Iphycus*. At length *Iphycus* releases *Melampus* from prison, upon his discovering to him how he might have an heir to succeed to his dominions, and rewards him with restoring the herds of *Neleus*: Then *Neleus* retracts his promise, and refuses to give his daughter *Pero* to *Bias* the brother of *Melampus*; upon this *Neleus* and *Melampus* quarrel, and engaging in a single combat, *Neleus* is vanquish'd, and *Melampus* retires to *Argos*. See lib. XI. v. 350, &c. and the annotations, Note 23.

The people's Saviour, and divinely wife,
 270 Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies,
 Yet short his date of life! by female pride he dies.
 From *Mentius Clitus*, whom *Aurora's* love
 Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above:

And

v. 270. *Below'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies,
 Yet short his date of life! by female pride he dies.]*

The Poet means *Eryphyle*, who, being brib'd with a golden bracelet by *Polynices*, persuaded her husband *Amphiaranus* to go to the *Theban* war, where he lost his life. This is a remarkable passage: Tho' he was lov'd by Jupiter and Apollo, yet he reach'd not to old age. Is a short life the greatest instance of the love of the Gods? *Plato* quotes the verse to this purpose. "The life of man is so loaded with calamity, that it is an instance of the favour of Heaven to take the burthen from us with speed." The same Author in *Asiarchus* (if that dialogue be his) asserts, that the Gods, having a perfect insight into human affairs, take speedily to themselves those whom they love. Thus when *Trochilus* and *Agamedes* had built a temple to *Apollo*, they pray'd to receive a blessing the most beneficial to mankind: the God granted their prayers, and they were both found dead the next morning. Thus likewise the Priestess of *Juno*, when her two sons had yok'd themselves to her chariot, and drawn her for the greater expedition to the temple, pray'd to the Goddess to reward their filial piety; and they both dy'd that night. This agrees with the expression of *Menander*, He whom the Gods love dies young.

"Ον οἱ θεοὶ φιλεῖν, ἀποθνήσκουσιν νῆες.

v. 272.

Aurora's love

Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above.]

There is nothing more common than such accounts of men being carried away by Goddesses, in all the *Greek* Poets; and yet what offends more against credibility? The Poets invented these fables merely out of compliment to the dead. When any person happen'd to be drown'd in a river; if a man, some Water Nymph stole him; if a woman, she was seiz'd to be the wife of the River God. If any were lost at sea, *Neptune* or some of the Sea

B 2

Gods

And *Polyphides* on whom *Phœbus* shone

275 With fullest rays, *Amphiaræus* now gone;

In *Hypereſia*'s groves he made abode,

And taught mankind the counſels of the God;

From him ſprung *Theoclymenus*, who found

(The ſacred wine yet foaming on the ground)

Gods or Goddeſſes had taken them to their beds. But to ſpeak to the preſent purpoſe; if any perſon dy'd in the fields, and his body happen'd not to be found, if he was murder'd and buried, or devour'd by wild beaſts, ſo that no account was heard of his death, he was immediately imagin'd to be taken from the earth by ſome Deity who was in love with his beauty. Thus *Clitus* being loſt in his morning ſports, like *Orion* while he was hunting, he was ſabled to be carry'd to Heav'n by *Aurora*; being loſt at the time of the morning, over which that Deity preſides.

v. 278. *From him ſprung Theoclymenus*——] We have had a long genealogical digreſſion to introduce *Theoclymenus*: I fear the whole paſſage will prove diſtaſteful to an *English* palate, it not being capable of any ornaments of Poetry. I could wiſh *Homer* had omitted or ſhorten'd ſuch Paſſages, tho' they might be uſeful in his age; for by ſuch honourable inſertions he made his court to the beſt families then in *Greece*. 'Tis true, the ſtory is told conciſely, and this occasions ſome obſcurity; diſtance of time as well as place, makes us ſee all objects ſomewhat confuſedly and indiſtinctly. In the days of *Homer* theſe ſtories were univerſally known, and conſequently wanted no explication; the obſcurity therefore is not to be charged upon *Homer*, but to Time, which has defac'd and worn away ſome parts of the impreſſion, and made the images leſs diſcernible.

The uſe the Poet makes of the adventure of *Theoclymenus*, is to give encouragement to *Telemachus*; he aſſiſts him with his advice, and by his gift of prophecy explains to him a prodigy in the concluſion of this Book. By this method he connects it with the main action, in giving *Telemachus* aſſurances that his affairs haſten to a re-eſta bliſhment. Beſides theſe ſhort relations are valuable, as they convey to poſterity brief hiſtories of antiqent facts and families that are extant no where elſe.

Telemachus :

- 280 *Telemachus* : whom, as to heav'n he prest
 His ardent vows, the stranger thus address'd:
 O thou! that dost thy happy course prepare
 With pure libations, and with solemn pray'r;
 By that dread pow'r to whom thy vows are paid;
 285 By all the lives of these; thy own dear head,
 Declare sincerely to no foe's demand
 Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.

v. 287. *Declare——thy name, and lineage, &c.*] These questions may be thought somewhat extraordinary; for what apparent reason is there for this fugitive to be told the name of the parents of *Telemachus*? But the interrogations are very material; he makes them to learn if *Telemachus* or his father are friends to the person slain by his hand? if they were, instead of sailing with him, he would have reason to fly from him, as from a person who might take away his life by the laws of the country. Thus in the *Hebrew* law, *Numb. xxxv. 9.* *The revenger of blood, (בֹּאֵן דָּמוֹ, or propinquus) shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him.* But the *Jews* had cities of refuge, to which the murderers fled as to a sanctuary: The *Greeks* in like manner, if the homicide fled into a voluntary exile, permitted him to be in security till the murder was aton'd, either by fulfilling a certain time of banishment, or by a pecuniary mulct or expiation.

I will only further remark the conciseness of these interrogations of *Theoclymenus*; he asks four questions in a breath, in the compass of one line; his apprehensions of being pursu'd give him no leisure to expatiate. *Homer* judiciously adapts his Poetry to the circumstances of the murderer, a man in fear being in great haste to be in security. *Telemachus* answers with equal brevity, being under a necessity to finish his voyage in the night to avoid the ambush of the suitors: For this reason *Homer* shortens the relation, and complies with the exigency of *Telemachus*: With this further view; to unite the subordinate story of *Telemachus* with that of *Ulysses*, it being necessary to hasten to the chief action, and without delay carry on the main design of the *Odyssey* in the re-establishment of *Ulysses*.

30 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XV.*

Prepare then, said *Telemachus*, to know
A tale from falsehood free, not free from woe.

290 From *Ithaca*, of royal birth I came,
And great *Ulysses* (ever honour'd name!)
Was once my Sire: tho' now for ever lost
In *Stygian* gloom he glides a pensive ghost!
Whose fate enquiring, thro' the world we rove;
295 The last, the wretched proof of filial love.

The Stranger then. Nor shall I ought conceal,
But the dire secret of my fate reveal.

Of my own tribe an *Argive* wretch I slew;
Whose pow'rful friends the luckless deed pursue
300 With unrelenting rage, and force from home
The blood-stain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.
But bear, oh bear me o'er yon azure flood,
Receive the suppliant! spare my destin'd blood!

Stranger (reply'd the Prince) securely rest
305 Affianc'd in our faith; henceforth our guest.
Thus affable, *Ulysses'* God-like heir
Takes from the stranger's hand the glitt'ring spear:
He climbs the ship, ascends the stern with haste,
And by his side the guest accepted plac'd.

310 The chief his orders gives: th' obedient band
With due observance wait the chief's command:

With

With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind,
Mimerns calls; the ready gales obey

315 With rapid speed to whirl them o'er the sea.
Crurus they pass'd, next *Chalcis* roll'd away,
When thick'ning darkness clos'd the doubtful day;

The

v. 316. *Crurus they pass'd, next Chalcis*———&c.] This whole passage has been greatly corrupted; one line is omitted in all our editions of *Homer*, and the verses themselves are printed erroneously: for thus they stand, lib. 8. p. 539. of *Strabo's* Geography.

Βαί δὲ παρὰ Κρήνῃς, καὶ Χαλκίδα καλλιρρίθρον,
Δύσσιντό τ' ἥλιος σκιάωντο τε πᾶσαι ἀγυιαί,
Ἡ δὲ Φειὰς ἐπὶβαλλὼν ἀγαλλομένη διὸς ἕρπ

The first line is added from *Strabo*: thus in *Latin*,

Præterierunt Crurus, & Chalcida fluentis amaran.

He writes, ἀγαλλομένη, for ἐπιρρομένη: and φειὰς, instead of φειδᾶς. The course that *Telemachus* steer'd is thus explain'd by the same Author: He first sail'd northwardly as far as *Elis*, then he turn'd towards the east, avoiding the direct course to *Ithaca*, to escape the ambush of the suitors, who lay between *Samos* and *Ithaca*. Then he pass'd the *Echinades* (call'd *Θεαί*, that is *ἔξαι*, or sharp-pointed by *Homer*. See *Strabo*, lib. 10. They are called *Oxias* by *Pliny*) lying near the gulph of *Corinth*, and the mouths of *Achelous*; thus leaving *Ithaca* on the east, and passing it, he alters his course again, sails northwardly between *Ithaca* and *Acarnania*, and lands on the coast opposite to the *Cephalenian* ocean, where the *Suitors* form'd their ambush. The places mention'd by *Homer* lie in this order, *Crurus*, *Chalcis*, and *Phœa*: and are all rivers of small note, or rather brooks, as *Strabo* expresses it: ἀδίκων ποταμῶν ὀνόματα, μᾶλλον δὲ Ὀχρίων.

32 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XV.

The silver *Phœa's* glitt'ring Rills they lost,
And skim'd along by *Elis'* sacred coast.

320 Then cautious thro' the rocky reaches wind,
And turning sudden, shun the death design'd.

Mean-time the King, *Eumæus*, and the rest,
Sate in the Cottage, at their rural feast:
The banquet past, and satiate ev'ry man,

325 To try his host *Ulysses* thus began.

Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your guest;
The last I purpose in your walls to rest:
To-morrow for my self I must provide,
And only ask your counsel, and a guide:

330 Patient to roam the street, by hunger led,
And bless the friendly hand that gives me bread.

It is highly probable that *Phœa*, and not *Phœra*, is the true reading, for *Phœra* lay in *Messenia*, and not in *Elis*, as *Strabo* writes, and was in possession of *Agamemnon*; for he mentions that city amongst the seven which he promises *Achilles*, in the ninth book of the *Iliad*.

*Sev'n ample Cities shall confess thy sway,
Thee Enope, and Phœræ thee obey.*

If it had not been under his dominion, how could he transfer the right to *Achilles*? besides, it would be absurd to joyn *Phœra* directly with *Chalcis*, when the one was in *Messenia*, the other in *Elis*; this would make the course of *Telemachus's* Navigation unintelligible, if *Elis* and *Messenia* were confounded in the relation, and used promiscuously without order or regularity.

I will only add that *Strabo* in the 20th book of his Geography, instead of *Καλλιπύθρον*, reads *πυρηνίσσαν*, perhaps thro' a slip of his memory.

There

There in *Ulysses'* roof I may relate
Ulysses' wand'rings to his royal mate ;
 Or mingling with the suitors haughty train,

335 Not undeserving, some support obtain.

Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
 Patron of industry and manual arts :
 Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,
 The pyre to build, the stubborn oak to rend ;

340 To turn the tasteful viand o'er the flame ;
 Or foam the goblet with a purple stream.
 Such are the tasks of men of mean estate,
 Whom Fortune dooms to serve the rich and great.

v. 336. *Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
 Patron of industry and manual arts.]*

Mercury was the servant and minister of the Gods, and was feign'd to be the patron of all persons of the like station upon earth ; it was supposed to be by his favour that all servants and attendants were successful in their several functions. In this view the connexion will be easy, " I will go (*says Ulysses*) and offer my service vice to the suitors, and by the favour of *Mercury*, who gives success to persons of my condition, shall prosper ; for no man is better able to execute the offices of attendance, than my self." It may be objected, that these functions are unworthy of the character, and beneath the dignity of an Heroe : but *Ulysses* is obliged to act in his assum'd, not real character ; as a beggar, not as a King. *Athenæus* (*lib. 1. p. 18.*) vindicates *Ulysses* in another manner. " Men (*says he*) in former ages perform'd their own offices, and gloried in their dexterity in such employments. Thus *Homer* describes *Ulysses* as the most dextrous man living, " in ordering wood for the fire, and in the arts of cookery." But it is no more derogation to him to put on the appearance of a beggar, than it was to *Pallas* to assume that of a swain, as she frequently does throughout the *Odyssey*.

B. 3

Alas!

34 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XV.

Alas! (*Eumæus* with a sigh rejoin'd)

345 How sprung a thought so monstrous in thy mind?

If on that god-less race thou wouldst attend,

Fate owes thee sure a miserable end!

Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky,

And pull descending vengeance from on high.

350 Not such, my friend, the servants of their feast:

A blooming train in rich embroid'ry drest,

With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,

And smiling round celestial Youth attends.

Stay then: no eye askance beholds thee here;

355 Sweet is thy converse to each social ear;

Well pleas'd, and pleasing, in our cottage rest,

Till good *Telemachus* accepts his guest

With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,

And safe conveys thee where thy soul desires.

360 To him the Man of woes. O gracious *Jove*!

Reward this stranger's hospitable love,

v. 348. *Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky.*] The sense of this passage appears to me very obvious; *Dacier* renders it, *whose violence and insolence is so great, that they regard not the Gods, and that they attack even the heavens.* I should rather chuse to understand the words in the more plain and easy construction: *Grotius* is of this judgment, and thinks they bear the same import as these in *Gen.* xviii. 21. *I will go down and see if they have done according to the cry which is come unto heaven;* and indeed there is a great similitude between the expressions.

Who

Who knows the son of sorrow to relieve,
Chears the sad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.
Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,

365 A life of wand'rings is the greatest woe :

On all their weary ways wait Care and Pain;
And Pine and Penury, a meagre train.

To such a man since harbour you afford,
Relate the farther fortunes of your Lord;

370 What cares his Mother's tender breast engage,
And Sire, forsaken on the verge of age;

v. 370. *What cares his Mother's tender breast engage,
And Sire, forsaken on the verge of age.*

These questions may seem to be needless, because *Ulysses* had been fully acquainted with the story of *Laertes*, and the Death of his mother *Anticlea*, by the shade of *Tiresias*; but *Ulysses* personates a stranger, and to carry on that character, pretends to be unacquainted with all the affairs of his own family. I cannot affirm that such frequent repetitions of the same circumstances are beautiful in *Homer*; the retirement of *Laertes* has been frequently mention'd, and the death of *Anticlea* related in other parts of the *Odyssey*; however necessary such reiterated accounts may be, I much question whether they will prove entertaining: *Homer* himself in this place seems to apprehend it, for *Eupeus* passes over the questions made by *Ulysses* with a very short answer, and enlarges upon other circumstances, relating to his family and affairs, to give (as *Enstathius* observes) variety to his Poetry. But this conduct is very judicious upon another account: It lets *Ulysses* into the knowledge of his condition, and by it he is able to take his measures with the greater certainty, in order to bring about his own re-establishment. This is a demonstration that the objection of *Rapin* is without foundation; he calls these interviews between *Ulysses* and *Eupeus* mere idle fables, invented solely for amusement, and contributing nothing to the action of the *Odyssey*; but the contrary is true, for *Ulysses* directs his course according to these informations.

36 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* Book XV.

Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,
Or range the house of darkness and of death?

To whom the Swain. Attend what you enquire.

375 *Laertes* lives, the miserable fire,

Lives, but implores of ev'ry pow'r to lay
The burden down, and wishes for the day.
Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,
Torn from th' embraces of his tender wife,

380 Sole, and all comfortless he wastes away,
Old age untimely posting ere his day.

She too, sad Mother! for *Ulysses* lost
Pin'd out her bloom, and vanish'd to a ghost.
(So dire a fate, ye righteous Gods! avert,

385 From ev'ry friendly, ev'ry feeling heart!)
While yet she was, tho' clouded o'er with grief,
Her pleasing converse minister'd relief:
With *Ctimene*, her youngest daughter, bred,
One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.

390 But when the softly-stealing pace of time
Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,
To *Samos'* Isle she sent the wedded fair;
Me to the fields, to tend the rural care;
Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,
395 Nor less the darling object of her love.

Her

Book XV. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 37

Her hapless death my brighter days o'ercast,
Yet Providence deserts me not at last;
My present labours food and drink procure,
And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.

400 Small is the comfort from the Queen to hear
Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;
Blank and discountenanc'd the servants stand,
Nor dare to question where the proud command:
No profit springs beneath usurping pow'rs;
405 Want feeds not there, where Luxury devours,

v. 399. *And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.*] This verse;

Τῶν ἱθαγόντ', ἐπιόντε, καὶ ἀιδόουσιν ἰδοῦκα.

has been traduc'd into the utmost obscenity; *Enstatius* vindicates the expression: It means "I have sustain'd my self with meat and drink by an honest industry, and have got wherewithal to relieve virtue that wants." He interprets ἀιδόουσιν, by ἀνδράσιν ἀιδῆς ἀξίοις; or, men worthy of regard and honour: ξήνοις καὶ καίταις. The following words,

—Οὐ μείλιχόν· ἴσιν ἀκῦσαι
"Οὐτ' ἔπος, ἔτ' τι ἔργον—

are capable of a double construction, and imply either that *I take my delight in hearing of Penelope, she being in distress, and in the power of the suitors*; or that the suitors so besiege the palace, that it is impossible for me to hear one gentle word from Penelope, or receive one obliging action from her hand. The preference is submitted to the Reader's judgment; they both contain images of tenderness and humanity.

Not

38 *HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book XV.*

Nor harbours Charity where Riot reigns :
Proud are the lords, and wretched are the swains.

The suffering chief at this began to melt ;
And, oh *Eupean* ! thou (he cries) hast felt

410 The spite of fortune too ! her cruel hand
Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land !
Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parents eyes,
To early wants ! a man of miseries !

Thy whole sad story, from its first, declare :

415 Sunk the fair City by the rage of war,
Where once thy parents dwelt ? or did they keep
In humbler life, the lowing herds and sheep ?
So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,
Rude Pyrates seiz'd, and shipp'd thee o'er the main ?

420 Doom'd a fair prize to grace some Prince's board,
The worthy purchase of a foreign lord.

If then my fortunes can delight my friend,
A story fruitful of events, attend :

Another's sorrow may thy ear enjoy,

425 And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ.

Long

Long nights the now-declining year bestows ;
 A part we consecrate to soft repose,
 A part in pleasing talk we entertain ;
 For too much rest itself becomes a pain.

430 Let those, whom sleep invites, the call obey ;
 Their cares resuming with the dawning day :
 Here let us feast, and to the feast be join'd
 Discourse, the sweeter banquet of the mind ;
 Review the series of our lives, and taste

335 The melancholy joy of evils past :

v. 426. *Long nights the now-declining year bestows, &c.*] From hence we may conclude, that the return of *Ulysses* was probably in the decline of the year, in the latter part of the autumn, and not in the summer; the nights then being short cannot be called Νύκτες ἀθροαί. *Eustathius*.

v. 429. ————*Too much rest it self becomes a pain.*] This aphorism is agreeable to nature and experience; the same thing is asserted by *Hippocrates*, *Sleep or watchfulness, when excessive, becomes diseases*; too much sleep occasions an access of perspiration, and consequently weakens and dissipates the animal spirits. *Dacier*.

v. 434. ————*and taste*

The melancholy joy of evils past.]

There is undoubtedly a great pleasure in the remembrance of past sufferings: Nay, calamity has this advantage over prosperity; an evil when past turns into a comfort; but a past pleasure, though innocent, leaves in its room an anxiety for the want of it, and if it be a guilty pleasure, a remorse. The reason (observes *Eustathius*) why past evils delight, is from the consciousness of the praise due to our prudence and patience under them, from the sense of our felicity in being deliver'd from them, and from gratitude to divine providence, which has deliver'd us. It is the joy of good men to believe themselves the favourites of Heaven.

For he who much has suffer'd, much will know;
And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on woe.

Above *Ortygia* lies an Isle of fame,

Far hence remote, and *Syria* is the name;

440 (There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace
The Sun's diurnal, and his annual race)

Not

v. 438. *Ortygia*.] This is an ancient name of *Delos*, so call'd from *ορτυξ*, a *Quail*, from the great numbers of those birds found upon that Island. *Lycophron*, in his obscure way of writing, calls it *ορτυξ πτερυμένη* or the *winged Quail*; perhaps from the fable of *Asteria* being turn'd into that bird in her flight from *Jupiter*, and giving name to the Island from the transformation she suffer'd upon it. It is one of the *Cyclades*, and lies in the *Ægean* ocean. *Syria*, or *Syros*, is another small Island lying eastward of *Ithaca*, according to true Geography.

v. 440. *There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace
The Sun's diurnal, and his annual race.*]

The words in *Homer* are *τροπαὶ ἡλίου*, or *solis conversiones*. *Monsieur Perrault* insults the Poet as ignorant of Geography, for placing *Syros* under the *Tropic*; an error (says he) which Commentators in vain have labour'd to defend, by having recourse to a *Sundial* of *Pherecydes* on which the motions of the Sun (the *τροπαὶ ἡλίου*) were design'd. The last defence would indeed be ridiculous, since *Pherecydes* flourish'd three hundred years after the time of *Homer*: No one (replies *Monsieur Boileau*) was ever at any difficulty about the sense of this passage; *Eustathius* proves that *τρηπιδας* signifies the same as *δύνειν*, and denotes the setting of the Sun; so that the words mean, that *Syros* is situate above *Ortygia*, on that side where the Sun sets, or westerly, *πρὸς τὰ δύτικα μέρη τῆς Ὀρτυγίας*. 'Tis true, *Eustathius* mentions a bower, *Σπῆλαιον*, in which the conversions of the Sun were figur'd. This indeed would fully vindicate *Homer*; but *Bochart* and others affirm, that *Eustathius* is in an error, and that *Syros* is so far from lying to the west, or *πρὸς τροπαὶς ἡλίου*, that it bears an eastern position both with respect to *Ithaca* and *Delos*: How is this objection to be answer'd? *Bochart* p. 411. of his *Geographia sacra*, explains it by having recourse to the bower mention'd by *Eustathius*, in

Not large, but fruitful; stor'd with grass to keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep;

Her

which the motions of the Sun were drawn. *Pherecydes* (says *Hesychius Mileſius*) having collected the writings of the *Phanicians*, from the use of them alone without any instructor, became famous in the world by the strength of his own genius: And *Laertius* writes, that an *Heliotrope* made by him was preserv'd in the Island of *Syros*. Thus it is evident, that he borrow'd his knowledge from the *Phanicians*, and probably his skill in Astronomy, they being very expert in that science, by reason of its use in their navigation. Why then might there not be a machine which exhibited the motions of the Sun, made by the *Phanicians*, and why might not *Homer* be acquainted with it? It is probable that *Pherecydes* took his pattern from this *Heliotrope*, which being one of the greatest rarities of antiquity, might give a great reputation to *Syros*, and consequently was worthy to be celebrated by *Homer*, the great preserver of Antiquities. *Fallian* igitur, (says *Bochart*) *Enſtathius*, cum vult intelligi, quasi sita sit *Syros* ad occidentem partem *Deli*; cum contra *Deli* ad ortum sit *Syros*, non ad occasum; Et rem sic se habere ex ipso *Homero* patet, apud quem *Eumæus* in *Ithacâ*, *Syriam* asserit esse trans *Delum*, quo nihil dici potuit falsius, si *Syros* sit ad occasum *Deli*. If this answer appears to any person too studied and abstruse, the difficulty may be solv'd, by supposing *Eumæus* speaking of *Delos* as it lay with respect to *Syros*, before he was carry'd from it; for instance, if *Syros* lies on the east of *Delos* to a man in *Ithaca*, both *Ithaca* and *Delos* will lie on the west of *Syros* to one of that Island; I would therefore imagine that *Eumæus* speaks as a native of *Syros*, and not as a sojourner in *Ithaca*, and then *Delos* will lie towards the sun-setting, or πρὸς ἡλίου Τρόπῳ: But this last I only propose as a conjecture, not presuming to offer it as a decision.

v. 442. Not large, but fruitful; stor'd with grass to keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep.]

It is probable that *Homer* was well acquainted with the nature of this Island, and that it really enjoy'd an admirable temperature of air, and therefore was exceedingly heathful; the fertility of the soil proves the happiness of the air, which would naturally free the inhabitants from the maladies arising from a less salubrious situation. It is for this reason that they are said to be slain by *Diana* and *Apollo*. All deaths that were sudden, and without sickness, were ascrib'd to those Deities. *Bochart* (p. 410.) tells us, that

- Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn,
 445 And her rich vallies wave with golden corn.
 No want, no famine the glad natives know,
 Nor sink by sickness to the shades below;
 But when a length of years unnerves the strong,
Apollo comes, and *Cynthia* comes along,
 450 They bend the silver bow with tender skill,
 And void of pain, the silent arrows kill.
 Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,
 Where two fair cities rise with equal pride;
 But both in constant peace one Prince obey,
 455 And *Ctesimus* there, my father, holds the sway:
 Freighted, it seems, with toys of ev'ry sort
 A ship of *Sidon* anchor'd in our port;

What:

that the name of *Syros* was given to the Island by the *Phenicians*; *Asira* or *Sira* signifying *rich*, in their language; or rather it was so called from *Sura*, or *Asura*, signifying *happy*; either of these derivations fully denote the excellence both of the soil and air: and that this name is of *Phenician* extract is probable from the words of *Homer*, who assures us that they stay'd a whole year upon this Island, and consequently had opportunity to know the healthfulness and fertility of it.

v. 457. *A ship of Sidon*————] Here is a full testimony, that the *Phenicians* were remarkable for arts and navigation over all the old world. They were expuls'd from their country by *Joshua*, (as *Bochart* informs us) and then settling along the sea coasts, they spread over all the Mediterranean, and by degrees sent out Colonies into *Europe*, *Asia*, and *Afric*; that they were in *Afric* appears from *Precopius*, where he mentions a pillar with a *Phenician* inscription. *Ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν οἱ φύγοντες ἀπὸ προσώπου Ἰησοῦ τῷ λαῷ υἱὸς Νάμ*; that is, *We are a people that fly from Joshua*
 the

- What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
 Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.
 460 This nymph, where anchor'd the *Phœnician* train
 To wash her robes descending to the main,
 A smooth-tongu'd sailor won her to his mind;
 (For Love deceives the best of woman-kind.)
 A sudden trust from sudden liking grew;
 465 She told her name, her race, and all she knew.

the son of Nuns, the robber; they gave him that title out of resentment for their dispossession. The character they bear in the Scriptures agrees with this in *Homer*. *Isaiab* xxiii. 2. *The Merchants of Sidon, that pass over the seas;* and it likewise appears from the Scriptures, that they excell'd in all arts of embroidery, and works of curiosity.

v. 458. *What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
 Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.*

I was surpriz'd to find that *Eusebius* mistook this *Phœnician* woman for the mother of *Eumæus*; she herself tells us, that she was only his Governess.

Παῖδα γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἑὸς ἐν μεγάροις ἀντιτάλαν.

It is not probable that *Eumæus* would have painted his own mother in the dress of an adulteress, and an abandon'd trayress: Nay, he directly distinguishes his mother from this *Phœnician* in the sequel of the story, (where he calls her *πόρνα μητέρα*, or his *venerable mother*) and when he speaks of the *Phœnician*, he constantly calls her *γυνή*, not *μήτηρ*. Nor indeed could he have call'd her *πόρνα* at all, if she had not been a person of such a detestable character. *Spondanus* adopts the mistake of *Eusebius*, and endeavours to vindicate her from the manner of her frailty. *Modeste decepta donis, &c. ut eorum libidine obsecundaret*, "it was a modest adultery, she being deceived by bribes to yield to their solicitation." However erroneous this opinion is, yet it shews *Spondanus* to be a kind and complaisant Casuist.

I too

44 *HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book XV.*

I too (she cry'd) from glorious *Sidon* came,
My father *Arybas*, of wealthy fame;
But snatch'd by pyrates from my native place,
The *Taphians* sold me to this man's embrace.

470 Haste then (the false designing youth reply'd)
Haste to thy country; love shall be thy guide:
Haste to thy father's house, thy father's breast,
For still he lives, and lives with riches blest.

" Swear first (she cry'd) ye sailors! to restore
475 " A wretch in safety to her native shore.

Swift as she ask'd, the ready sailors swore.
She then proceeds: Now let our compact made
Be nor by signal nor by word betray'd,
Nor near me any of your crew descry'd

480 By road frequented, or by fountain-side.
Be Silence still our guard. The Monarch's spies
(For watchful Age is ready to surmize)
Are still at hand; and this reveal'd must be
Death to your selves, eternal chains to me.

485 Your vessel loaded, and your traffic past,
Dispatch a wary messenger with haste:
Then gold and costly treasures will I bring,
And more, the infant offspring of the King.

Him,

Him, child-like wand'ring forth, I'll lead away,

190 (A noble prize!) and to your ship convey.

Thus spoke the dame, and homeward took the road,

A year they traffic, and their vessel load.

Their stores compleat, and ready now to weigh,

A spy was sent their summons to convey:

495 An artist to my father's palace came,

With gold and amber chains, elab'rate frame:

Each female eye the glitt'ring links employ,

They turn, review, and cheapen ev'ry toy.

He took th' occasion as they stood intent,

500 Gave her the sign, and to his vessel went.

She strait pursu'd, and seiz'd my willing arm;

I follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.

Three golden goblets in the porch she found,

(The guests not enter'd, but the table crown'd)

v. 502. *I follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.*] There is a little incredibility in this narration: for if *Eumæus* was such an infant as he is describ'd to be at the time when he was betray'd by his *Phœnician* Governess, what probability is there that he should be able to retain all these particulars so circumstantially? He was not of an age capable of making, or remembring so many observations. The answer is, that he afterwards learn'd them from *Læertes*, who bought him of the *Phœnicians*: and no doubt they told him the quality of *Eumæus*, to enhance the Price and make the better bargain. It is also natural to imagine, that *Eumæus*, when he grew up to manhood, might be inquisitive after his own birth and fortunes, and therefore might probably learn these particulars from *Læertes*, *Enesthins*.

Hid

- 505 Hid in her fraudulent bosom, these she bore;
 Now set the sun, and darken'd all the shore.
 Arriving then, where tilting on the tydes
 Prepar'd to launch the freighted vessel rides;
 Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and sweep
 510 With level oar along the glassy deep.
 Six calmy days and six smooth nights we sail,
 And constant *Jove* supply'd the gentle gale.
 The sev'nth, the fraudulent wretch, (no cause descry'd)
 Touch'd by *Diana's* vengeful arrow, dy'd.
 515 Down dropt the caitiff corse, a worthless load,
 Down to the deep; there roll'd the future food
 Of fierce sea-wolves, and monsters of the flood.
 An helpless infant I remain'd behind;
 Thence born to *Ithaca* by wave and wind;
 520 Sold to *Laertes*, by divine command,
 And now adopted to a foreign land.

To

v. 511. *Six calmy days, &c.*] It is evident from this passage, that it is above six days sail from *Ithaca* to *Syros*, tho' carried with favourable winds. *Dacier*.

v. 514. ~~————~~ *Diana's vengeful arrow* ———] I would just observe the poetical justice of *Homer*, in the punishment of this *Phœnician*. Misfortune generally pursues wickedness, and tho' we escape the vengeance of man, yet heav'n frequently overtakes us when we think we are in security, and death calls us from our impious acquisitions.

v. 521. *And now adopted to a foreign land.*] *Homer* has here given us an History of the life of *Emmanis*; the Epifode contains
 2 near

- To him the King. Reciting thus thy cares,
 My secret soul in all thy sorrows shares:
 But one choice blessing (such as *Jove's* high will)
 525 Has sweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill:
 Torn from thy country to no hapless end,
 The Gods have, in a master, giv'n a friend.
 Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,
 (For she needs little) daily bread and wine.
 530 While I, so many wand'rings past and woes,
 Live but on what thy poverty bestows.
 So past in pleasing dialogue away
 The night; then down to short repose they lay;
 'Till radiant rose the messenger of day. }
 535 While in the port of *Ithaca*, the band
 Of young *Telemachus* approach'd the land;

Their

near an hundred lines, and may seem entirely foreign to the action of the *Odyssey*. I will not affirm that it is in every respect to be justify'd. The main story is at a stand; but we are to consider that this relation takes up but small part of one leisure evening, and that the action cannot proceed till the return of *Telemachus*. It is of use to set off the character of *Ramens*, and shew him to be a person of quality, worthy to be an agent in an Epic Poem, where every character ought to be remote from meanness: So the story has a distant relation to the *Odyssey*, and perhaps is not to be look'd upon merely as an excrescence from the main building, but a small projection to adorn it.

v. 534. 'Till radiant rose the messenger of day.] This is the morning of the thirty eighth day since the beginning of the *Odyssey*. 'Tis observable that *Telemachus* takes more time in his return from *Pylas*, than in sailing thither from his own country; for in the latter

48 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XV.*

Their sails they loos'd, they lash'd the mast aside,
And cast their anchors, and the cables ty'd:
Then on the breezy shore descending, join

440 In grateful banquet o'er the rosy wine.

When thus the Prince: Now each his course pursue;
I to the fields, and to the city you.

Long absent hence, I dedicate this day
My swains to visit, and the works survey.

545 Expect me with the morn, to pay the skies

Our debt of safe return, in feast and sacrifice:

Then *Theoclymenus*. But who shall lend,
Mean-time, protection to thy stranger-friend?

Strait to the Queen and Palace shall I fly,

550 Or yet more distant, to some Lord apply?

The Prince return'd. Renown'd in days of yore
Has stood our Father's hospitable door;
No other roof a stranger shou'd receive,
Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.

latter end of the second book he sets sail after sun-setting, and reach'd *Pyle* in the morning: Here he embarks in the afternoon, and yet arrives not at *Ithaca* till after break of day. The reason of it is not to be ascrib'd to a less prosperous wind, but to the greater compass he was oblig'd to fetch, to escape the ambush of the suitors. In the former voyage he steer'd a direct course; in this, he sails round about to the north of *Ithaca*, and therefore wastes more time in his voyage to it.

But

555 But in my absence riot fills the place,
 Nor bears the modest Queen a stranger's face;
 From noiseful revel far remote she flies,
 But rarely seen, or seen with weeping eyes.
 No——let *Eurymachus* receive my guest,
 560 Of nature courteous, and by far the best;
 He wooes the Queen with more respectful flame,
 And emulates her former husband's fame:
 With what success, 'tis *Jove's* alone to know,
 And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or woe.

v. 561. *He wooes the Queen with more respectful flame,
 And emulates her former husband's fame.]*

The words in the original are ὀδυρόντος γάτας ἔστιν, which may either be render'd, *to obtain the honour of marrying Penelope*, agreeably to the former part of the verse; or it means that *Eurymachus* has the fairest hopes to marry *Penelope*, and obtain the throne or γάτας of *Ulysses*. *Hobbs* translates the verse almost obscenely in the former sense:

—————*He best loves my mother,
 And what my father did, would do the same.*

The former in my judgment is the better construction, especially because it avoids a tautology, and gives a new image in the second part of the verse, very different from the sense express'd in the former part of it. But of all the meanings it is capable of I should prefer this; "That he courts her upon the most honourable principles, and seems desirous to have the honour of *Ulysses*, by imitating his worth"; and this is agreeable to the character of *Eurymachus*, which distinguishes him from all the other Suitors.

6

565 Thus speaking, on the right up-soar'd in air
 The hawk, *Apollo's* swift-wing'd messenger;
 His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove;
 The clotted feathers scatter'd from above
 Between the Heroe and the Vessel pour
 570 Thick plumage, mingled with a sanguine show'r.
 Th' observing Augur took the Prince aside,
 Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetic cry'd.

Yon

v. 566. *The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger.*] The Augury is thus to be interpreted; *Ulysses* is the hawk, the Suitors the pidgeon; the hawk denotes the valour of *Ulysses*, being a bird of prey; the pigeon represents the cowardice of the Suitors, that bird being remarkable for her timorous nature. The hawk flies on the right, to denote success to *Ulysses*.

Homer calls this bird the Messenger of *Apollo*; not that this augury was sent by that Deity, (tho' that be no forced interpretation) but the expression implies, that the hawk was sacred to *Apollo*; as the peacock was to *Juno*, the owl to *Pallas*, and the eagle to *Jupiter*. Thus *Ælian*, *anim. lib. 10. c. 14.* Ἀργείοι τὸν ἱέρακα τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τιμᾶν ἰσχυροί, &c. and he gives the reason of it, for the hawk is the only bird that is capable to bear the lustre of the Sun without inconvenience and difficulty; the same is said of the eagle, but this hawk is reckon'd to be of the *Aquiline* kind. It was death among the *Egyptians* to kill this bird, because it was dedicated to *Apollo*.

There is another reason why any bird that was taken notice of by way of augury, may be said to be the messenger of *Apollo*: that Deity presiding over divination.

v. 571. *Th' observing Augur took the Prince aside.*] The reason why *Telemachus* withdraws *Telemachus*, while he interprets the Augury, is not apparent at the first view; but he does it out of an apprehension lest he should be over-heard by some of the company, who might disclose the secret to the Suitors, and such a discovery might prove fatal to his own person, or to the fortunes of *Telemachus* *Enstathius*.

Yon

Yon bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,

Rose ominous, nor flies without a God:

575 No race but thine shall *Ithaca* obey,

To thine, for ages, heav'n decrees the sway.

Succeed the Omen, Gods! (the youth rejoin'd)

Soon shall my bounties speak a grateful mind,

And soon each envy'd happiness attend

580 The man, who calls *Telemachus* his friend.

Then to *Peiræus* — Thou whom time has prov'd

A faithful-servant, by thy Prince belov'd!

Till we returning shall our guest demand,

Accept this charge, with honour, at our hand.

585 To this *Peiræus*; Joyful I obey,

Well pleas'd the hospitable rites to pay.

The presence of thy guest shall best reward

(If long thy stay) the absence of my Lord.

v. 581. *Then to Peiræus—Thou whom time has prov'd, &c.*]
We find that *Telemachus* intended to deliver *Theoclymenus* to the care of *Eurymachus*: What then is the reason why he thus suddenly alters that resolution, and intrusts him to *Peiræus*? This is occasion'd by the discovery of the skill of *Theoclymenus* in Augury: He fears lest the Suitors should extort some prediction from him that might be detrimental to his affairs, or should he refuse it, to the person of *Theoclymenus*. *Ensiathus*.

This book comprehends somewhat more than the space of two days and one night; for the vision appears to *Telemachus* a little before the dawn, in the night preceding the thirty sixth day, and he lands in *Ithaca* on the thirty eighth in the morning.

52 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* Book XV.

With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,
590 Mount the tall bark, and launch into the sea.
All with obedient haste forsake the shores,
And plac'd in order, spread their equal oars.
Then from the deck the Prince his sandals takes;
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin shakes.
595 They part; while less'ning from the Hero's view,
Swift to the town the well-row'd gally flew:
The Heroe trod the margin of the main,
And reach'd the mansion of his faithful swain.



THE



Telemachus arriv'd at Eumeus's, remembers his Father by the help of Minerva, who appears to Ulysses in the Shape of a Beautifull Woman.



THE
SIXTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.



C 3

The



The A R G U M E N T.

The Discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus.

Telemachus arriving at the lodge of Eumæus sends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulysses commands him to discover himself to his son. The Princes, who had lain in ambush to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated, return to Ithaca.

T H E

THE
SIXTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

SOON as the morning blush'd along the plains,
Ulysses, and the Monarch of the Swains.
 Awake the sleeping fires, their meal prepare,
 And forth to pasture send the bristly care.

The

V. 1. *Soon as the morning blush'd along the plains, &c.*] This Book opens with the greatest simplicity imaginable. *Dionysius Halicarnassensis* quotes the sixteen first Lines to this purpose: The Poet, says that Author, describes a low and vulgar action, yet gives it an inexpressible sweetness; the ear is pleased with the harmony of the Poetry, and yet there is nothing noble in the sentiments. Whence, continues he, does this arise? from the choice of the words, or from the placing of them? No one will affirm that it consists in the choice of the words, for the diction is entirely low and vulgar, so vulgar that a common Artificer or Peasant, who never studied elocution, would use it in conversation; turn the Verses into Prose, and this will appear. There are no transposi-

56 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

5 The Prince's near approach the dogs descry,
And fawning round his feet, confess their joy.

Their

tions, no figures, no variety of dialect, nor any new and studied expressions. Where then is the beauty of the Poetry? It must be entirely ascrib'd to the harmonious juncture and position of the words; and he concludes that the *collocation* of words has a greater efficacy both in Prose and Poetry, than the *choice*. And indeed a judicious Disposition of them (like what is feign'd of *Minerva* in this Book) makes a mean, deform'd, and vulgar period, rise, like *Ulysses* from beggary, into pomp and dignity. This may be exemplify'd from the rules of mechanic arts: an architect, when he gathers his materials for a building, has these three things chiefly in view: first, with what piece of stone, wood, &c. a correspondent piece will best agree: next he considers their several formations, and how it will best stand in the structure; and lastly, if any part of the materials suits not with the allotted place, he rejects it or new shapes it, till it agrees with the whole work: The same care is to be taken by a good writer: he is first to consider what Noun or Verb is to be join'd to other Nouns or Verbs so fitly, as not possibly to be plac'd more conveniently; for a promiscuous connecting of words indiscriminately spoils both Prose and Poetry: Next he considers the frame and turn of the Verb or Noun, and how it will stand in the place he allots it; and if it suits not exactly, he changes it, sometimes by varying the Numbers, sometimes the Cases, and at other times the Genders: And lastly, if a word prove so stubborn as not to bend to the level of the period, he entirely rejects it, and introduces another that preserves a due conformity; or at least, if an harmonious word be necessary, he places it so judiciously between more agreeable and tuneful words, that their harmony steals away our imagination from observing the roughness of the others: Like wise Generals, who in ordering the ranks of their Soldiers, strengthen the weaker files by sustaining them with the stronger; and by this method render the whole invincible. See likewise *Cap. 32. of Longinus*, of the disposition of words.

v. 3. ————*their meal prepare.*] The word in the original is ἀριστον, which here denotes very evidently the morning repast: it is used but in one other place in all *Homer* in this sense: *Iliad. Lib. 24. V. 124.*

Ἐσθιμῆναι ἰνὶ ἑσπέρῳ καὶ ἑνὶ ἡμέρῳ ἀριστον

But

Their gentle blandishment the King survey'd,
Heard his resounding step, and instant said:

Some

But we are not therefore to imagine that this was an usual meal; *Homer* in other places expresses it by δειπνον, as is observed by *Athenæus*, *Lib.* 1.

Οἱ δ' ἄρα δειπνον ἔλοντ' ἀπὸ δ' αὐτῷ θωρήσσοντο.

"At the dawn of the day they took repast and arm'd themselves for battle". The *Greeks* had three customary meals, which are distinctly mention'd by *Palamedes* in *Æschylus*,

"Ἀριστα, δειπνα, θόρπαθ' αἰεῖσθαι τρίτα.

Homer, adds *Athenæus*, mentions a fourth repast, *Lib.* 17. of the *Odyssey*:

————— οὐ δ' ἔρχο διελήσας.

This the *Romans* call'd *commessationem*, we a collation, a repast taken, as the same Author explains it, between dinner and supper; the word is deriv'd ἀπὸ τῆς δελῆς ὀφίας, or the evening twilight. But *Athenæus* refutes himself, *lib.* 5. p. 193. I have already (says he) observ'd that the Antients eat thrice a-day; and 'tis ridiculous to imagine that they eat four times, from these words of *Homer*,

————— οὐ δ' ἔρχο διελήσας.

For that expression meant only that *Eumæus* should return in the evening, διελὼν διατρίψας χρόνον. But this is not the full import of the word διελήσας, for it undoubtedly means, To take the evening repast or supper, as is evident from the conclusion of the seventeenth Book of the *Odyssey*: Return, says *Telemachus* to *Eumæus*, but first take refreshment; and *Eumæus* accordingly eats, and the Poet immediately adds, because the Evening was come, or ἐπὶ λυθὲ δέλεον ἦμας. However in no sense can this word be brought to prove that the *Greeks* eat four times in the day: but if any person will imagine that it signifies in that place an immediate meal, all that can be gather'd from it is, that *Telemachus* out of kindness

58 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

Some well-known friend (*Eumæus*) bends this way ;

10 His steps I hear ; the dogs familiar play.

While yet he spoke, the Prince advancing drew
Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.

Transported from his seat *Eumæus* sprung,
Drop'd the full bowl, and round his bosom hung ;

Kissing

to *Eumæus* commands him to eat before the usual hour of repast, before he leaves his palace : but *Hesychius* rightly interprets it by τὸ δειπνὸν λαβεῖν ἡμεβρωσία that is, *eating his supper* ; for as δειπνον and ἀριστον signify the dinner, so δόρπον and δειπνὸν denote the time of supper promiscuously.

I will add no more, but refer the Reader for a full Explication of δειπνον, ἀριστον and δειπνὸν, to *Lib. 8. Question 6. of Plutarch's Symposiacs.*

v. 14. Drop'd the full bowl——] In the original it is, *Eumæus* drop'd the bowl as he temper'd it with water. It was customary not to drink wine unmix'd amongst the antients ; there was no certain proportion observ'd in the mixture, some to one vessel of wine pour'd in two of water, others to two of wine, five of water. *Homer* tells us that the wine of *Maron* was so strong as to require twenty measures of water to one of wine ; but perhaps this is spoken hyperbolically, to shew the uncommon strength of it. The *Lacedemonians* us'd to boil their wine till the fifth part was consum'd, and then keeping it four years, drank it ; but sometimes the *Grecians* drank it without water (but this they call'd reproachfully ἐπισκυθίσαι, or to act like a *Scythian*, from whom they borrow'd the custom.) It was usual even for Children to drink wine thus temper'd, amongst the *Grecians* ; thus in this Book *Enrymachus*

——ἐπίσχέ δε οἶνον ἐρθρόν.

And *Phanias* in the 9th of the *Iliads*, speaking of *Achilles* ;

——οἶνον ἐπίσχω.

Πολλάκι μοι κατεδύσας.

At

- 15 Kissing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye
 The tears rain'd copious in a show'r of joy.
 As some fond fire who ten long winters grieves,
 From foreign climes an only son receives,
 (Child of his age) with strong paternal joy
- 20 Forward he springs, and clasps the favourite boy:
 So round the youth his arms *Eumæus* spread,
 As if the grave had giv'n him from the dead.
 And is it thou? my ever dear delight!
 O art thou come to bless my longing sight!
- 25 Never, I never hop'd to view this day,
 When o'er the waves you plow'd the desperate way:
 Enter, my child! beyond my hopes restor'd,
 O give these eyes to feast upon their lord.
 Enter, oh seldom seen! for lawless pow'rs
- 30 Too much detain thee from these sylvan bow'rs:
 The Prince reply'd; *Eumæus*, I obey;
 To seek thee, friend, I hither took my way.

At *Athens* there was an altar erected to *Bacchus ἑρμῆς*, because from thus tempering the wine men return'd *spright* or sober from entertainments; and a law was enacted by *Amphitryon*, and afterwards reviv'd by *Solon*, that no unmix'd wine should be drank at any entertainment.

69 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

But say, if in the court the Queen reside
Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride?

V. 33. ——— if in the court the Queen reside
Severely chaste, or if commenc'd a bride?

Homer here makes use of a proverbial expression. It may thus be literally translated,

Or say if obstinate no more to wed,
She dooms to spiders nets th' imperial bed?

Telemachus means by this question, if Penelope be determin'd no more to marry; for the marriage-bed was esteem'd so sacred, that upon the decease or absence of the husband, it remain'd unus'd.

Eustathius quotes the same expression from other Authors of Antiquity; thus Hesiod,

Ἐκ δ' αἰγίων ἱλαστέας ἀράχνας.

"You shall clear the vessels from spiders webs"; meaning that you shall have so full employment for your vessels, that the spiders shall no more spread their looms there. And another Poet praying for peace, wishes spiders may weave their nets upon the soldiers arms; εἰρεος ποιήτης ἐθέλων εἰρήνην ὑψάσθας, ἀράχνας ἐπιεύχεται ἡμάτα υἱάνας τοῖς ὅπλοις. Thus we find amongst the Greeks it was an expression of dignity, and apply'd to great and serious occasions; I am not certain that it is so used by the Romans. Catullus uses it jocosely, speaking of his empty purse.

————— nam tui Catulli

Plenus sacculus est aranearum.

Plautus does the same in his *Aulularia*:

————— anne quis ades auferat?

Nam hic apud nos nihil est aliud quasi furibus,

Ita inaniis sunt oppletæ, atque araneis.

I am not doubtful if it be not too mean an image for English Poetry.

Thus

35 Thus He: and thus the Monarch of the Swains;
Severely chaste *Penelope* remains,
But lost to every joy, she wastes the day
In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.

He ended, and (receiving as they pass
40 The javelin, pointed with a star of brass)
They reach'd the dome; the dome with marble shin'd.
His seat *Ulysses* to the Prince resign'd.
Not so——(exclaims the Prince with decent grace)
For me, this house shall find an humbler place:

45 T'usurp the honours due to silver hairs
And rev'rend strangers, modest youth forbears.
Instant the swain the spoils of beasts supplies,
And bids the rural throne with osiers rise.

There sate the Prince: the feast *Eumæus* spread;
50 And heap'd the shining canisters with bread.

v. 43. *Not so——*(exclaims the Prince——) Nothing can more strongly represent the respect which antiquity paid to strangers, than this conduct of *Telemachus*: *Ulysses* is in rags, in the disguise of a beggar, and yet a Prince refuses to take his seat. I doubt not but every good man will be pleas'd with such instances of benevolence and humanity to his fellow-creatures; one well natur'd action is preferable to a thousand great ones, and *Telemachus* appears with more advantage upon this heap of hides and osiers, than a Tyrant upon his throne.

Thick

62 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,

The frugal remnants of the former day.

Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,

Around whose verge a mimic Ivy twines.

55 And now, the rage of thirst and hunger fled,

Thus young *Ulysses* to *Eumæus* said.

Whence father, from what shore this stranger, say?

What vessel bore him o'er the wat'ry way?

To human step our land impervious lies,

60 And round the coast circumfluent oceans rise.

The swain returns. A tale of sorrows hear;

In spacious *Crete* he drew his natal air:

Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,

For heav'n has wove his thread of life with pain.

v. 52. *The frugal remnants of the former day.*] This entertainment is neither to be ascrib'd to parsimony nor poverty, but to the custom and hospitality of former ages. It was a common expression among the *Greeks* at table, *leave something for the Medes*; intimating that something ought to be left for a guest that might come accidentally. *Plutarch* in his 7th Book of the *Sympos.* *Question 3.* commends this conduct. *Eumæus* (says that Author) a wise scholar of a wise master, is no way discomposed, when *Telemachus* pays him a visit, he immediately sets before him

The frugal remnants of the former day.

Besides, the table was accounted sacred to the Gods, and nothing that was sacred was permitted to be empty; this was another reason why the Antients always reserv'd part of their provisions, not solely out of hospitality to men, but piety to the Gods.

Half-

65 Half-breathless 'scaping to the land, he flew

From *Thesprot* mariners, a murd'rous crew.

To thee my son the suppliant I resign,

I gave him my protection, grant him thine.

Hard task, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,

70 Willing to aid, unable to defend.

Can

v. 70. *Willing to aid,*————] It has been observ'd that *Homer* intended to give us the picture of a compleat Heroe in his two Poems, drawn from the characters of *Achilles* and *Ulysses*: *Achilles* has consummate valour, but wants the wisdom of *Ulysses*: *Ulysses* has courage, but courage inclining to caution and stratagem, as much as that of *Achilles* to rashness. *Virgil* endeavour'd to form a compleat Heroe in *Aeneas*, by joining in his person the forward Courage of *Achilles* with the wisdom of *Ulysses*, and by this conduct gives us a perfect character. The same observation holds good with respect to the subordinate characters introduc'd into the two Poems of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; and makes an essential difference between them; Thus the *Iliad* exhibiting an example of heroic valour, almost all the characters are violent and heroic. *Diomed*, *Ajax*, *Hector*, &c. are all chiefly remarkable for courage: But the *Odyssey* being intended to represent the patience and wisdom of an Heroe, almost all the characters are distinguish'd by benevolence and humanity. *Telemachus* and *Eumæus*, *Alcinous*, *Nestor* and *Menelaus* are every where represented in the mild light of wisdom and hospitality. This makes a continu'd difference of style in the Poetry of the two Poems, and the characters of the agents in the *Odyssey* necessarily exhibit lectures of piety and morality: The Reader should keep this in his view. In reading *Homer*, the *Odyssey* is to be look'd upon as a sequel of the *Iliad*, and then he will find in the two Poems the perfection of human nature, consummate courage join'd with consummate piety. He must be an unobserving Reader, who has not taken notice of that *Vein of humanity* that runs thro' the whole *Odyssey*; and a bad man, that has not been pleas'd with it. In my Opinion, *Eumæus* tending his herds is more amiable than *Achilles* in all his destructive Glory. There is scarce a speech made in the *Odyssey* by *Eumæus*, *Telemachus* or *Ulysses*, but what tends to the improvement

I.

of

64 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

Can strangers safely in the court reside,
Midst the swell'd insolence of lust and pride?
Ev'n I unsafe: The Queen in doubt to wed,
Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed?

75 Perhaps she weds regardless of her fame,
Deaf to the mighty *Ulyssæan* name.

However, stranger! from our grace receive
Such honours as besit a Prince to give;
Sandals, a sword, and robes, respect to prove,

80 And safe to sail with ornaments of love.
Till then, thy guest amid the rural train
Far from the court, from danger far, detain.
'Tis mine with food the hungry to supply,
And cloath the naked from th'inclement sky.

85 Here dwell in safety from the suitors wrongs,
And the rude insults of ungovern'd tongues.

of mankind: It was this that endear'd the *Odyssey* to the antients, and *Homer's* sentences of morality were in every mouth, and introduc'd in all conversation for the better conduct of human life. This Verse was thus apply'd by some of the antients; a person being ask'd what was the Duty of an Orator, or Pleader, answer'd from *Homer*,

**Ἀνδρ' ἀπαμύνασθαι ὅτι τις προτέρος χαλεπήνῃ.*

In short, I will not deny but that the *Iliad* is by far the nobler Poem, with respect to the Poetry; it is fit to be read by Kings and Heroes; but the *Odyssey* is of use to all mankind, as it teaches us to be good men rather than great, and to prefer morality to glory,

For

Book XVI. HOMER's ODYSSEY. 65

For should'st thou suffer, pow'rless to relieve
I must behold it, and can only grieve.

The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,

90 O'erpow'r'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.

To whom, while anger in his bosom glows,
With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.
Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue
At once to pity and resent thy wrong.

95 My heart weeps blood, to see a soul so brave
Live to base insolence of pow'r a slave.
But tell me, dost thou Prince, dost thou behold
And hear their midnight revels uncontroul'd?
Say, do thy subjects in bold faction rise,

100 Or priests in fabled Oracles advise?

v. 92. *With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.*] There is not a more spirited speech in all the *Odyssey* than this of *Ulysses*; his resentment arises from the last words of *Telemachus*, observes *Enstathius*:

*The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,
O'erpow'r'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.*

He is preparing his son for the destruction of the Suitors, and animating him against despair, by reason of their Numbers. This he brings about, by representing that a brave man in a good cause prefers death to dishonour. By the same method *Homer* exalts the character of *Ulysses*: *Telemachus* thinks it impossible to resist the Suitors, *Ulysses* not only resists them, but almost without assistance works their destruction. There is a fine contrast between the try'd courage of *Ulysses*, and the inexperience of *Telemachus*.

Or

69 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

Or are thy brothers, who should aid thy pow'r,
Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour?
O that I were from great *Ulysses* sprung,
Or that these wither'd nerves like thine were strung;

105 Or heav'ns! might he return! (and soon appear
He shall, I trust; a Heroe scorns despair)

Might

v. 105.

—————(and soon appear

He shall, I trust; a Heroe scorns despair.]

Some antient Critics, as *Eustathius* informs us, rejected this Verse and thus read the passage:

Ἡ παῖς ἐξ Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος ἢ καὶ αὐτὸς ;

Ἄντιν' ἔπωτ' αἶπ' ἱμῶο κάρη τέμνοι ἀλλότριος φάος.

Then the sense will be, *Oh that I were the son of Ulysses, or Ulysses himself, &c.*

For, add they, if this Verse be admitted, it breaks the transport of *Ulysses's* resentment, and cools the warmth of the expression; *Eustathius* confesses that he was once of the same opinion, but afterwards seems dubious; for, continues he, *Ulysses* by saying, *Oh that I were the son of Ulysses, or Ulysses himself*, gave room to suspect that he was himself *Ulysses*; and therefore to efface this Impression, he adds with great Address,

—————(and soon appear

He shall, I trust; a Heroe scorns despair)

And by this method removes all jealousy that might arise from his former expression. *Dacier* misrepresents *Eustathius*; she says, *Il avoit donné lieu à quelque subjon qn'il ne fust véritablement Ulysse*; whereas he directly says *μη υποπτεύειν ὅτι Ὀδυσσεύς ἐστιν ὁ λαλῶν*, that is, "he uses this Expression, that it may not be suspected that he is *Ulysses* who speaks": In reality he inserts these words solely to avoid discovery, not judging it yet seasonable to reveal himself to *Telemachus*, much less to *Eumæus*.

Might

Might he return, I yield my life a prey
To my worst foe, if that avenging day
Be not their last: but should I lose my life

- 110 Oppress'd by numbers in the glorious strife,
I chuse the nobler part, and yield my breath
Rather than bear dishonour worse than death;
Than see the hand of violence invade
The reverend stranger, and the spotless maid;
115 Than see the wealth of Kings consum'd in waste,
The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feast.

Thus he, with anger flashing from his eye;
Sincere the youthful Heroe made reply.

Nor leagu'd in factious arms my subjects rise,

- 120 Nor priests in fabled oracles advise;
Nor are my brothers who should aid my pow'r
Turn'd mean deserters in the needful hour.
Ah me! I boast no brother; heav'n's dread King
Gives from our stock an only branch to spring:

- 125 Alone *Laertes* reign'd *Arcefus*' heir,
Alone *Ulysses* drew the vital air,

v. 108. *To my worst foe*] The words in *Greek* are ἀλλότριος
φῶς, or, *may I fall by the hand of a stranger*; that is, by the
worst of enemies, foreigners being usually the most barbarous
enemies; This circumstance therefore aggravates the calamity.
Enstatius.

And

68 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,

And unblest offspring of a fire unblest!

Each neighb'ring realm conducive to our woe

130 Sends forth her peers, and every peer a foe:

The court proud *Samos* and *Dulichium* fills,

And lofty *Zacynth* crown'd with shady hills.

Ev'n *Ithaca* and all her Lords invade

Th' imperial scepter, and the regal bed:

135 The Queen averse to love, yet aw'd by pow'r,

Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour:

Mean-time their licence uncontroll'd I bear;

Ev'n now they envy me the vital air:

But heav'n will sure revenge, and Gods there are.

140 But go, *Eumæus*! to the Queen impart

Our safe return, and ease a mother's heart.

Yet

v. 127. *And I alone the bed connubial grac'd.*] Homer mentions but one son of *Ulysses*; other authors name another, *Arche-silans*; and *Sophocles*, *Eurylaus* slain by *Telemachus*; but perhaps these descended not from *Penelope*, but Concubines. *Eustathius*.

v. 140. *But go, Eumæus! to the Queen impart*] There is nothing more wonderful in *Homer*, than the distribution of his incidents; and how fully must he be possess'd of his whole subject, and take it in all at one view, to bring about the several parts of it naturally? *Minerva* in the beginning of the fifteenth Book commanded *Telemachus* to dispatch *Eumæus* to *Penelope*, to inform her of his return. Here this command is executed: but is this all the use the Poet makes of that Errand? It is evident it is not: This command furnishes him with a natural occasion for the removal of *Eumæus* while *Ulysses* discovers himself to *Telemachus*. But why might not the discovery have been made before *Eumæus*?

Book XVI. *HOMER's ODYSSEY.* 69

Yet secret go ; for numerous are my foes,
And here at least I may in peace repose.

To whom the swain, I hear, and I obey :

5 But old *Laertes* weeps his life away,
And deems thee lost: shall I my speed employ
To bless his age, a messenger of joy?
The mournful hour that tore his son away
Sent the sad fire in solitude to stray ;

10 Yet busied with his slaves, to ease his woe,
He dress'd the vine, and bad the garden blow,
Nor food nor wine refus'd: but since the day
That you to *Pylas* plow'd the wat'ry way,
Nor wine nor food he tastes; but sunk in woes,
5 Wild springs the vine, no more the garden blows.
Shut from the walks of men, to pleasure lost,
Pensive and pale he wanders half a ghost.

us? It was suitable to the cautious character of *Ulysses* not to trust the knowledge of his person to too many people: besides, if he had here reveal'd himself to *Eumæus*, there would not have been room for the discovery which is made in the future parts of the *Odyssey*, and consequently the Reader had been robb'd of the pleasure of it: and it must be allow'd, that the several concealments and discoveries of *Ulysses* thro' the *Odyssey* add no small pleasure and beauty to it,

Wretched

Wretched old man! (with tears the Prince returns)

Yet cease to go——what man so blest but mourns?

160 Were every wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies,

This hour shou'd give *Ulysses* to my eyes.

But to the Queen with speed dispatchful bear

Our safe return, and back with speed repair:

And let some handmaid of her train resort

165 To good *Laertes* in his rural court.

v. 159. *Yet cease to go——what man so blest but mourns?* *Enstathius* reads the words differently, either ἀχρῦμενον πῖρ, or ἀχρῦμενα πῖρ. If we use the former reading, it will be understood according to the recited translation; if the latter, it must then be refer'd to *Telemachus*, and imply, *let us cease to inform Laertes, though we grieve for him*. I suppose some Critics were shock'd at the words in the former sense, and thought it cruel in *Telemachus* not to relieve the sorrows of *Laertes*, which were occasion'd chiefly thro' fondness to his person: *Dacier* is fully of this opinion: *Enstathius* prefers neither of the lections: I doubt not but *Homer* wrote ἀχρῦμενον πῖρ; this agrees with the whole context.

Wretched old man! (with tears the Prince returns)

Yet cease to go——what man so blest but mourns?

Were every wish indulg'd by fav'ring skies,

• This hour should give *Ulysses* to my eyes.

And as for the cruelty of *Telemachus*, in forbidding *Eumans* to go to *Laertes*, there is no room for this objection: he guards against it, by requesting *Penelope* to give him immediate information; which might be done almost as soon by a messenger from her, as by *Eumans*. Besides, such a messenger to *Laertes* would be entirely foreign to the Poem; for his knowledge of the return of *Telemachus* could contribute nothing to the design of the *Odyssey*: Whereas the information given to *Penelope* has this effect; it puts the Suitors upon new measures, and instructs her how to regulate her own conduct with regard to them; and therefore the Poet judiciously dwells upon this, and passes over the other.

While

While yet he spoke, impatient of delay
 He brac'd his sandals on, and strode away :
 Then from the heav'ns the martial Goddess flies
 Thro' the wide fields of air, and cleaves the skies ;
 170 In form, a virgin in soft beauty's bloom,
 Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

v. 170. *In form, a virgin*—————] Some of the antient Philosophers thought the Poets guilty of impiety, in representing the Gods assuming human appearances; *Plato* in particular (*lib. 2. de Repub.*) speaks with great severity. " If a God (says that Author) changes his own shape, must he assume a more or less perfect form? undoubtedly a shape less perfect; for a Deity, as a Deity, can want no perfection; therefore all change must be for the worse: now it is absurd to imagine that a Deity can be willing to assume imperfection, for this would be a degradation unworthy of a divine Power, and consequently it is absurd to imagine that a Deity can be willing to change the form of a Deity; it therefore follows, that the Gods enjoying a perfection of nature, must eternally and unchangeably appear in it". Let no Poet therefore (meaning *Homer*) persuade you that the Gods assume the form of strangers, and are visible in such appearances. It must be confess'd, that if *Plato* had thus spoken only to refute the absurd opinions of Antiquity, which imagin'd the Gods to assume unworthy shapes of bulls, dragons, swans, &c. only to perform some rape, or action unbecoming a Deity, reason would be on his side: But the argument proves too much; supposes that a Deity must lose his perfections by any appearance, but of a Deity; which is an error: If a God acts suitably to the character of a God, where is the degradation? *Aristotle* was of this judgment, in opposition to his master *Plato*; and thought it no diminution to a God to appear in the shape of man, the glory of the Creation: In reality, it is a great honour to *Homer*, that his opinions agree with the verity of the Scriptures, rather than the conjectures of Philosophers; nay, it is not impossible but these relations might be borrow'd from the sacred History: it being manifest that *Homer* had been in *Egypt*, the native country of *Moses*, in whose writings there are frequent instances of this nature.

Alone

72 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

Alone to *Ithacus* she stood display'd,
But unapparent as a viewless shade
Escap'd *Telemachus* : (the pow'rs above

175 Seen or unseen, o'er earth at pleasure move)

The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread
Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.
The Goddess beck'ning waves her deathless hands;
Dauntless the King before the Goddess stands.

Then

v. 176. *The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread
Of pow'r divine———]*

This may seem a circumstance unworthy of Poetry, and ridiculous to ascribe a greater sagacity to the brute creation, than to man; but it may be answer'd, that it was the design of the Goddess to be invisible only to *Telemachus*, and consequently she was visible to the dogs. But I am willing to believe that there is a deeper meaning, and a beautiful moral couch'd under this story: And perhaps *Homer* speaks thus, to give us to understand, that the brute creation it self confesses the divinity. *Dacier*.

v. 178. *The Goddess beck'ning waves her deathless hands.]* The Goddess evidently acts thus, that *Telemachus* might not hear her speak to *Ulysses*; for this would have made the discovery, and precluded that beautiful interview between *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* that immediately follows. It is for the same reason that she conceals herself from *Telemachus*, for the discovery must have been fully and convincingly made by the appearance and veracity of a Deity; and then there could have been no room for all those doubts and fears of *Telemachus*, that enliven and beautify the manner of the discovery. The whole relation is indeed an allegory; The wisdom of *Ulysses* (in Poetry, *Minerva*) suggests to him, that this is a proper time to reveal himself to *Telemachus*; the same wisdom (or *Minerva*) instructs him to dress himself like a King, that he may find the readier credit with his son: In this dress he appears a new man, young and beautiful, which gives occasion to *Telemachus* to imagine him a Deity; especially because he was an infant when his father sail'd to *Troy*, and therefore though he now

- 180 Then why (she said) O favour'd of the skies!
 Why to thy god-like son this long disguise?
 Stand forth reveal'd: with him thy cares employ
 Against thy foes; be valiant, and destroy!
 Lo I descend in that avenging hour,
 185 To combat by thy side, thy guardian pow'r.
 She said, and o'er him waves her wand of gold;
 Imperial robes his manly limbs infold:
 At once with grace divine his frame improves;
 At once with majesty enlarg'd he moves:
 190 Youth flush'd his red'ning cheek, and from his brows
 A length of hair in sable ringlets flows;
 His black'ning chin receives a deeper shade:
 Then from his eyes upsprung the warrior-maid.
 The Heroe reascends: The Prince o'ercrow'd
 195 Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a God.

Then

appears like *Ulysses*, *Telemachus* does not know him to be his father. This is the naked story, when stript of its poetical ornaments.

V. 194.

—The Prince o'ercrow'd

Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a God.]

I must offer a remark in opposition to that of *Dacier* upon this place: "This fear of *Telemachus* (says that Author) proceeds from the opinion of the Antients when the Gods came down visibly; they thought themselves so unworthy of such a manifestation, that whenever it happen'd, they believ'd they should die, or meet with some great calamity": Thus the *Israelites* address *Moses*; *Speak thou to us, and we will hear, but let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die.* Thus also *Gideon*; *Alas! O Lord, my God, because*

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Then with surprize (surprize chafis'd by fears)
How art thou chang'd! (he cry'd) a God appears!

Far other vests thy limbs majestic grace,

Far other glories lighten from thy face!

200 If heav'n be thy abode, with pious care

Lo! I the ready sacrifice prepare:

Lo! gifts of labour'd gold adorn thy shrine,

To win thy grace; O save us pow'r divine!

because I have seen an Angel of the Lord face to face, and the Lord said to him, fear not, thou shalt not die. Hence it is very evident, that this notion prevail'd amongst the Israelites: But how does it appear that the Greeks held the same opinion? The contrary is manifest almost to a demonstration: the Gods are introduc'd almost in every book both of the Iliad and Odyssey; and yet there is not the least foundation for such an assertion: nay, Telemachus himself in the second book returns thanks to Minerva for appearing to him, and prays for a second vision.

O Goddess! who descending from the skies,

Vouchsaf'd thy presence to my longing eyes;

Hear from thy heav'n above, O warrior Maid,

Descend once more propitious to my aid!

It is not to be imagined that *Telemachus* would have preferr'd this prayer, if the presence of the Deity denot'd death, or some great calamity; and all the Heroes throughout the *Iliad* esteem such intercourses as their glory, and converse with the Gods without any apprehensions. But whence then proceeds this fear of *Telemachus*? entirely from a reverential awe and his own modesty while he stands in the presence of a Deity; for such he believes *Ulysses*. The words of *Telemachus* agree with his behaviour; he speaks the language of a man in surprize: It is this surprize at the sudden change of *Ulysses*, that first makes him imagine him a Deity, and upon that imagination offer him sacrifice and prayer; the whole behaviour paints the nature of man under surprize, and which transports the speaker into vehemence and emotion.

Few

- Few are my days, *Ulysses* made reply,
 205 Nor I, alas! descendent of the sky.
 I am thy father. O my son! my son!
 That father, for whose sake thy days have run
 One scene of woe; to endless cares consign'd;
 And outrag'd by the wrongs of base mankind.
 210 Then rushing to his arms, he kiss'd his boy
 With the strong raptures of a parent's joy.
 Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew:
 He strain'd him close, as to his breast he grew.
 Ah me! (exclaims the Prince with fond desire)
 215 Thou art not——no, thou can'st not be my fire.
 Heav'n such illusion only can impose,
 By the false joy to aggravate my woes.
 Who but a God can change the general doom;
 And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom?
 220 Late worn with years in weeds obscene you trod,
 Now cloath'd in majesty, you move a God!
 Forbear, he cry'd; for heav'n reserve that name,
 Give to thy father but a father's claim:
 Other *Ulysses* shalt thou never see,
 225 I am *Ulysses*, I (my son) am He.
 Twice ten sad years o'er earth and ocean tost,
 'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coast.

Pallas, unconquer'd maid, my frame surrounds

With grace divine; her pow'r admits no bounds:

230 She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles shed;

Now strong as youth, magnificent I tread.

The Gods with ease frail man depress, or raise;

Exalt the lowly, or the proud debase.

He spoke and fate. The Prince with transport flew,

235 Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek bedew;

Nor less the father pour'd a social flood;

They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.

As the bold eagle with fierce sorrow stung,

Or parent vultur, mourns her ravish'd young;

They

v. 238. *As the bold eagle———*] This is a beautiful comparison; but to take its full force, it is necessary to observe the nature of this *phén* or *vultur*: *Homer* does not compare *Ulysses* to that bird merely for its dignity, it being of the Aquiline kind, and therefore the King of birds; but from the knowledge of the nature of it, which doubles the beauty of the allusion: This bird is remarkable for the love it bears towards its young: *Tearing open her own thigh, she feeds her young with her own blood*: Thus also another Author;

Τὸν μὲν ἐκλέμενοντες, ἡματωμένοις

Γάλακτος ὀλκοῖς ξωπύρουσι τὰ βρέφη.

Remore exacto, sanguineo lactis deflaxe, suos fetus refocillant. And the *Egyptians* made the vultur their hieroglyphic, to represent a compassionate nature. This gives a reason why this bird is introduced with peculiar propriety to represent the fondness of *Ulysses* for *Telemachus*. But where is the point of the similitude? *Ulysses* embraces his son, but the vultur is said to mourn the loss of her young: *Enstathius* answers, that the sorrow alone, and vehemence

240 They cry, they scream, their unfledg'd brood a prey
To some rude churl, and born by stealth away,
So they aloud: and tears in tides had run,
Their grief unfinish'd with the setting sun:

But

hemeence of it, is intended to be illustrated by the comparison; I think he should have added the affection *Ulysses* bears to *Telemachus*.

It is observable, that *Homer* inserts very few similitudes in his *Odyssey*, tho' they occur frequently almost in every book of the *Iliad*. The *Odyssey* is wrote with more simplicity, and consequently there is less room for allusions. If we observe the similies themselves inserted in each Poem, we shall find the same difference: In the *Iliad* they are drawn from lions, storms, torrents, conflagrations; thunder, &c. In the *Odyssey*, from lower objects, from an heap of thorns, from a shipwright plying the wimble, an armourer tempering iron, a matron weeping over her dying husband, &c. The Similies are likewise generally longer in the *Iliad* than the *Odyssey*, and less resemblance between the thing illustrated, and the illustration; the reason is, in the *Iliad* the similitudes are introduced to illustrate some great and noble object, and therefore the Poet proceeds till he has rais'd some noble image to inflame the mind or the Reader; whereas in these calmer scenes the Poet keeps closer to the point of allusion, and needs only to represent the object, to render it entertaining: By the former conduct he raises our admiration above the subject, by adding foreign embellishments; in the latter he brings the copy as close as possible to the original, to possess us with a true and equal image of it.

It has been objected by a *French Critic*, that *Homer* is blameable for too great a length in his similitudes; that in the heat of an action he stops short, and turns to some illusion, which calls off our attention from the main subject. 'Tis true, comparisons ought not to be too long, and are not to be plac'd in the heat of an action, as *Mr. Dryden* observes, but when it begins to decline: Thus in the first *Aeneis*, when the storm is in its fury, the Poet introduces no comparison, because nothing can be more impetuous than the storm it self; but when the heat of the description abates, then lest we should cool too soon; he renews it by some proper similitude, which still keeps up our attention and

D 3

fixes

But checking the full torrent in its flow,

245 The Prince thus interrupts the solemn woe.

What

fixes the whole upon our minds. The similitude before us is thus placed at the conclusion of the Heroe's lamentation, and the Poet by this method leaves the whole deeply fix'd upon the memory. *Virgil* has imitated this comparison in his fourth *Georgic*, but very judiciously substituted the nightingale in the place of the vultur, that bird being introduc'd to represent the mournful music of *Orpheus*.

*Qualis populeâ mœrens Philomela sub umbra
Amisſos queritur fœus quos durus arator
Observans nido implumes detraxit; at illa
Flet noctem, &c.*

Nothing can be sweeter than this comparison of *Virgil*, but the learned *Huetius* thinks he has found a notorious blunder in it: This nightingale (says he) in the first line sits in the shade of a poplar, and yet in the fourth she mourns by night, *flet noctem*. It is evident that Monsieur *Huet* mistakes the word *umbra* for the shade of the tree, which it casts while the sun shines upon it; whereas it only means that the bird sings *sub foliis*, or conceal'd in the leaves of it, which may be done by night as well as by day: But if it be thought that this is not a sufficient answer, the passage may be thus understood: The nightingale mourning under the shade of a poplar, &c. ceases not all night, or *flet noctem*; that is, she begins her song in the evening by day, but mourns all night. Either of these answers are sufficient for *Virgil's* vindication.

V. 245. *The Prince thus interrupts the solemn woe.*] It does not appear at first view why the Poet makes *Telemachus* recover himself from his transport of sorrow sooner than *Ulyſſes*: Is *Telemachus* a greater master of his passions? or is it to convince *Ulyſſes* of his son's wisdom, as *Enſtathius* conjectures? this can scarce be suppos'd, *Ulyſſes* being superior in wisdom. I would chuse rather to ascribe it to human nature; for it has been observ'd, that affection seldom so strongly ascends, as it descends; the child seldom loves the father so tenderly, as the father the child: This observation has been made from the remotest Antiquity. And it is wisely design'd by the great Author of our Natures; for in the common course of life, the child must bury the parent;

Book XVI. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 79

What ship transported thee, O father say,
And what blest hands have rear'd thee on the way?

All, all (*Ulysses* instant made reply)

I tell thee all, my child, my only joy!

250 *Phæacians* bore me to the port assign'd,

A nation ever to the stranger kind;

Wrapt in th' embrace of sleep, the faithful train

O'er seas convey'd me to my native reign:

Embroider'd vestures, gold, and brags are laid

255 Conceal'd in caverns in the sylvan shade.

Hither, intent the rival rout to slay

And plan the scene of death, I bend my way:

So *Pallas* wills—but thou, my son, explain

The names, and numbers of th' audacious train;

260 'Tis mine to judge if better to employ

Assistent force, or singly to destroy.

parent; it is therefore a merciful dispensation, that the tie of blood and affection should be loosen'd by degrees, and not torn violently asunder in the full strength of it. It is expected that aged persons should die, their loss therefore grows more familiar to us, and it loses much of its horror through the long expectation of it.

v. 250. *Phæacians bore me to the port assign'd.*] Here is a repetition of what the Reader knows entirely, from many parts of the preceding story; but it being necessary in this place, the Poet judiciously reduces it into the compass of six lines, and by this method avoids prolixity. *Enslathius.*

O'er earth (returns the Prince) resounds thy name,
Thy well-try'd wisdom, and thy martial fame,
Yet at thy words I start, in wonder lost;

265 Can we engage, not decads, but an host?

Can we alone in furious battle stand,
Against that num'rous, and determin'd band?

Hear then their numbers: From *Dulichium* came
Twice twenty six, all peers of mighty name,

270 Six are their menial train: twice twelve the boast

Of *Samos*; twenty from *Zacynthus* coast:

And twelve our country's pride; to these belong

Medon and *Phemius* skill'd in heav'nly song.

v. 268. *Hear then their numbers, ————*] According to this catalogue, the Suitors with their attendants (the two sewers, and *Medon*, and *Phemius*) are a hundred and eighteen; but the two last are not to be taken for the enemies of *Ulysses*; and therefore are not involv'd in their punishment in the conclusion of the *Odyssey*. *Eustathius*.

Spondanus mistakes this passage egregiously.

Μέδων κῆρυξ καὶ Φῆϊος αἰοιδῆς.

He understands it thus, "*Medon* who was an Herald and a di-
"vine bard." *Prætor unus qui & idem Musicus*: 'Tis true, the
construction will bear this interpretation; but it is evident from
the latter part of the 22d *Odyssey*, that the *Κῆρυξ* and the *Ἀοιδῆς*
were two persons, namely, *Medon* and *Phemius*: *Medon* acts all
along as a friend to *Penelope* and *Telemachus*, and *Phemius* is af-
firm'd to be detain'd by the Suitors involuntarily, and consequent-
ly they are both guiltless.

- Two few'rs from day to day the revels wait,
 275 Exact of taste, and serve the feast in state.
 With such a foe th' unequal fight to try,
 Were by false courage unreveng'd to die.
 Then what assistant pow'rs you boast, relate,
 Ere yet we mingle in the stern debate.
- 280 Mark well my voice, *Ulysses* strait replies:
 What need of aids, if favour'd by the skies?
 If shielded to the dreadful fight we move,
 By mighty *Pallas*, and by thund'ring *Jove*.
 Sufficient they (*Telemachus* rejoin'd)
- 285 Against the banded pow'rs of all mankind:
 They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds,
 Wither the strength of man, and awe the Gods.
 Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might
 We rise terrific to the task of fight.

But

v. 288. *Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might
 We rise terrific to the task of fight.]*

This whole discourse between *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* is introduc'd to prepare the Reader for the Catastrophe of the Poem: *Homer* judiciously interests Heaven in the cause, that the Reader may not be surpriz'd at the event, when he sees such numbers fall by the hands of these Heroes; he consults probability, and as the Poem now draws to a conclusion, sets the assistance of Heaven full before the Reader.

It is likewise very artful to let us into some knowledge of the event of the Poem; all care must be taken that it be rather guess'd than known. If it be entirely known, the Reader finds nothing

D 5

new

82 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

290 But thou, when morn salutes th' aerial plain,

The court revisit and the lawless train :

Me thither in disguise *Eumæus* leads,

An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.

There,

new to awaken his attention; if on the contrary it be so intricate, that the event cannot possibly be guess'd at, we wander in the dark, and are lost in uncertainty. The art of the Poet consists not in concealing the event entirely; but when it is in some measure foreseen, in introducing such a number of incidents that now bring us almost into the sight of it, then by new obstacles perplex the story to the very conclusion of the Poem; every obstacle, and every removal of it fills us with surprize, with pleasure or pain alternately, and consequently calls up our whole attention. This is admirably describ'd by *Vida*, lib. 2.

—————
*Eventus nonnullis sæpe canendo
Indiciis porro ostendunt in luce malignâ
Sublustrique aliquid dant cernere noctis in umbrâ.*

Th' event should glimmer with a dubious ray,
Not hid in clouds, nor glare in open day.

This rule he afterwards illustrates by a very happy similitude.

*Haud aliter longinqua petit qui forte viator
Mœnia, si positas altis in collibus arces
Nunc etiam dubias oculis videt, incipit ultro
Latior ire viam, placidumque urgere laborem,
Quàm cum nusquam ulla cernuntur quas adit arces,
Obscurum sed iter tendit convallibus imis.*

The conduct both of *Virgil* and *Homer* are agreeable to this observation; for instance, *Anchises* and *Tyresias* in the shades, foretel *Aeneas* and *Ulysses* that all their troubles shall end prosperously, that the one shall found the Roman Empire, the other regain his kingdoms; but the means being kept conceal'd, our appetite is rather whetted than cloy'd, to know by what means these events

are

There, if base scorn insult my rev'rend age,
 295 Bear it my son! repress thy rising rage:
 If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel,
 Bear it my son! howe'er thy heart rebel!

are brought about: Thus, as in *Vida's* allusion, they shew us the City at a great distance, but how we are to arrive at it, by what roads they intend to guide us to it, this they keep conceal'd; the journey discovers itself, and every step we advance leads us forward, and shews where we are to take the next; neither does the Poet directly lead us in the strait path, sometimes we are as it were in a labyrinth, and we know not how to extricate our selves out of it; sometimes he carries us into by-ways, and we almost lose sight of the direct way, and then suddenly they open into the chief road, and convey us to the journey's end. In this consists the skill of the Poet; he must form probable intricacies, and then solve them probably; he must set his Heroe in dangers, and then bring him out of them with honour. This observation is necessary to be apply'd to all those passages in the *Odyssey*, where the event of it is obscurely foretold, and which some tasteless Critics have blam'd, as taking away the curiosity of the Reader by an unseasonable discovery.

V. 296. *If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel,
 Bear it my son! howe'er thy heart rebel.*]

Plutarch in his Treatise upon reading Poems, observes the wisdom of *Ulysses* in these instructions: He is the person who is more immediately injur'd, yet he not only restrains his own resentment, but that of *Telemachus*: He perceives that his son is in danger of flying out into some passion, he therefore very wisely arms him against it. Men do not put bridles upon horses when they are already running with full speed, but they bridle them before they bring them out to the race: This very well illustrates the conduct of *Ulysses*; he fears the youth of *Telemachus* may be too warm, and through an unseasonable ardour at the sight of his wrongs, betray him to his enemies; he therefore persuades him to patience and calmness, and pre-disposes his mind with rational considerations to enable him to encounter his passions, and govern his resentment,

Yet strive by pray'r and counsel to restrain
 Their lawless insults, tho' thou strive in vain :

300 For wicked ears are deaf to wisdom's call,
 And vengeance strikes whom heav'n has doom'd to fall.

* *Mi-* Once more attend: When * she whose pow'r inspires
NERVA. The thinking mind, my soul to vengeance fires;
 I give the sign: that instant, from beneath,

305 Aloft convey the instruments of death,
 Armour and arms; and if mistrust arise,
 Thus veil the truth in plausible disguise.

" These glittering weapons, ere he sail'd to Troy

" *Ulysses* view'd with stern heroic joy ;

310 " Then, beaming o'er th' illumin'd wall they shone:

" Now dust dishonours all their lustre gone.

" I bear them hence (so *Jove* my soul inspires)

" From the pollution of the fuming fires ;

v. 304. ———— *That instant, from beneath,*

Aloft convey the instruments of death.]

These ten lines occur in the beginning of the nineteenth book, and the ancients (as *Enstathius* informs us) were of opinion, that they are here plac'd improperly; for how, say they, should *Ulysses* know that the arms were in a lower apartment, when he was in the country, and had not yet seen his Palace? But this is no real objection; his repository of arms he knew was in the lower apartment, and therefore it was rational to conclude that the arms were in it. The verses are proper in both places; here *Ulysses* prepares *Telemachus* against the time of the execution of his designs; in the nineteenth book that time is come, and therefore he repeats his instructions.

Left

- “ Left when the bowl inflames, in vengeful mood
 315 “ Ye rush to arms, and stain the feast with blood;
 “ Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite
 “ The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.
 Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive:
 For *Jove* infatuates all, and all believe.
 320 Yet leave for each of us a sword to wield,
 A pointed javelin, and a fenceful shield.
 But by my blood that in thy bosom glows,
 By that regard a son his father owes;
 The secret that thy father lives, retain
 325 Lock'd in thy bosom from the household train;

Hide

v. 316. *Of ready swords in luckless hour incite*

The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.]

This seems to have been a proverbial expression, at least it has been so used by latter writers: The observation holds true to this day, and it is manifest that more men fall by the sword in countries where the inhabitants daily wear swords, than in those where a sword is thought no part of dress or ornament. *Dacier.*

v. 324. *The secret that thy father lives, retain*

Lock'd in thy bosom———]

This injunction of secrecy is introduc'd by *Ulysses* with the utmost solemnity; and it was very necessary that it should be so; the whole hopes of his re-establishment depending upon it: Besides, this behaviour agrees with the character of *Ulysses*, which is remarkable for disguise and concealment. The Poet makes a further use of it; namely, to give him an opportunity to describe at large the several discoveries made to *Penelope*, *Laertes*, and *Eumæus* personally by *Ulysses*, in the sequel of the *Odyssey*, which are no small ornaments to it; yet must have been omitted, or have lost their effect, if the return of *Ulysses* had been made known by *Telemachus*; this would have been like discovering the plot before

86 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* Book XVI.

Hide it from all; ev'n from *Enmaus* hide;
From my dear father, and my dearer bride.

One care remains, to note the loyal few
Whose faith yet lasts among the menial crew;

330 And noting, ere we rise in vengeance prove
Who loves his Prince; for sure you merit love.

To whom the youth: To emulate I aim
The brave and wise, and my great father's fame.

But re-consider, since the wisest err,

335 Vengeance resolv'd 'tis dang'rous to defer:

What length of time must we consume in vain,

Too curious to explore the menial train?

While the proud foes, industrious to destroy

Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy.

340 Suffice it in this exigence alone

To mark the damsels that attend the throne:

fore the beginning of the play. At the sametime this direction is an excellent rule to be observ'd in management of all weighty affairs, the success of which chiefly depends upon secrecy.

v. 334. *But re-consider*—] The Poet here describes *Telemachus* rectifying the judgment of *Ulysses*; Is this any disparagement to that Heroe? It is not, but an exact representation of human nature; for the wisest man may receive, in particular cases, instructions from men less wise; and the eye of the understanding in a young man, may sometimes see further than that of age; that is, in the language of the Poet, a wise and mature *Ulysses* may sometimes be instructed by a young and unexperienc'd *Telemachus*.

Dispers'd

Dispers'd the youth resides; their faith to prove
Jove grants henceforth, if thou hast spoke from *Jove*.

While in debate they waste the hours away,
 345 Th' associates of the Prince repass'd the bay;

v. 343. *If thou hast spoke from Jove.*] The expression in the Greek is obscure, and it may be ask'd, to what refers *Διὸς τίρας*? *Dacier* renders it, *S'il vray que vous ayez vu un Prodige*; or "it it be true that you have seen a prodigy." Now there is no mention of any prodigy seen by *Ulysses* in all this interview, and this occasions the obscurity: but it is imply'd, for *Ulysses* directly promises the assistance of *Jupiter*; and how could he depend upon it, but by some prodigy from *Jupiter*? *Eustathius* thus understands the words; *τίρας, ἐξ ἑορμαίνοντος ἔφης ἀμύσσορα τὸν Διὰ ἡμῖν εἶδαι*. And then the meaning will be, "If the prodigy from *Jupiter* be evident, there is no occasion to concern our selves about the household train." But then does not that expression imply doubt, and a jealousy, that *Ulysses* might possibly depend too much upon supernatural assistance? It only insinuates, that he ought to be certain in the interpretation of the prodigy, but *Telemachus* refers himself entirely to *Ulysses*, and acquiesces in his judgment.

v. 345. *Th' associates of the Prince repass'd the bay.*] It is manifest that this vessel had spent the evening of the preceding day, the whole night and part of the next morning, in sailing from the place where *Telemachus* embark'd: For it is necessary to remember that *Telemachus* to avoid the Suitors had been obliged to fetch a large compass, and land upon the northern coast of *Ithaca*; and consequently the vessel was necessitated to double the whole Isle on the western side to reach the *Ithacan* bay. This is the reason that it arrives not till the day afterwards, and that the Herald dispatched by the associates of *Telemachus*, and *Eumæus* from the country, meet upon the road, as they go to carry the news of the return of *Telemachus* to *Penelope*. It is likewise evident that the lodge of *Eumæus* was not far distant from the place; for he sets out toward the City after eating in the morning, and passing some time in conference with *Telemachus*, delivers his message, and returns in the evening of the same day.

With

88 *HOMER's ODYSSEY.* Book XVI.

With speed they guide the vessel to the shores;
 With speed debarking land the naval stores;
 Then faithful to their charge, to *Chyius* bear,
 And trust the presents to his friendly care.

350 Swift to the Queen a herald flies t' impart
 Her son's return, and ease a parent's heart;
 Left a sad prey to ever-musing cares,
 Pale grief destroy what time a while forbears.

Th' uncautious Herald with impatience burns,
 355 And cries aloud, Thy son, oh Queen returns:
Eumæus sage approach'd th' imperial throne,
 And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,

[v. 355. *And cries aloud, Thy son, oh Queen, returns.*] This little circumstance distinguishes characters, and gives variety to Poetry: It is a kind of painting, which always varies its figures by some particular ornament, or attitude, so as no two figures are alike: The contrary conduct would make an equal confusion both in Poetry and Painting, and an indistinction of persons and characters. I will not promise that these particularities are of equal beauty, as necessary, especially in modern languages; the *Greek* is always flowing, sonorous and harmonious; the language, like leaves, oftentimes conceals barrenness, and a want of fruit, and renders the sense at least beautiful, if not profitable; this is wanted in some degree in *English* Poetry, where it is not always in our power to conceal the nakedness with ornaments: This particularity before us is of absolute necessity, and could not well be avoided; the indiscretion of the Herald in speaking aloud, discovers the return of *Telemachus* to the Suitors, and is the incident that brings about their following debates, and furnishes out the entertainment of the succeeding part of this book.

Then

Then measur'd back the way——The suitor band
Stung to the soul, abash'd, confounded stand;

360 And issuing from the dome, before the gate,
With clouded looks, a pale assembly sate.

At length *Euonymachus*. Our hopes are vain;
Telemachus in triumph fails the main.

Haste, rear the mast, the swelling shroud display;
365 Haste, to our ambush'd friends the news convey!

Scarce had he spoke, when turning to the strand
Amphinomus survey'd th' associate band;
Full to the bay within the winding shores
With gather'd sails they stood, and lifted oars.

370 O friends! he cry'd, elate with rising joy,

See to the port secure the vessel fly!

Some God has told them, or themselves survey
The bark escap'd; and measure back their way.

Swift at the word descending to the shores,

375 They moor the vessel and unlade the stores:

Then moving from the strand, apart they sate,
And full and frequent, form'd a dire debate.

Lives then the boy? he lives, (*Antinous* cries)
The care of Gods and fav'rite of the skies.

380 All night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels
Aurora flam'd above the eastern hills,

And

And from the lofty brow of rocks by day

Took in the ocean with a broad survey:

Yet safe he sails! the pow'rs cœlestial give

385 To shun the hidden snares of death, and live.

But die he shall, and thus condemn'd to bleed

Be now the scene of instant death decreed:

Hope ye success? undaunted crush the foe.

Is he not wise? know this, and strike the blow.

390 Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws

- The *Greeks*, averse too justly to our cause?

Strike,

v. 391. *The Greeks, averse too justly to our cause.*] This verse is inserted with great judgment, and gives an air of probability to the whole relation; for if it be ask'd why the Suitors defer to seize the supreme power, and to murder *Telemachus*, they being so superior in number? *Antinous* himself answers, that they fear the people, who favour the cause of *Telemachus*, and would revenge his injuries: 'Tis for this reason that they form'd the ambush by sea; and for this reason *Antinous* proposes to intercept him in his return from the country: they dare not offer open violence, and therefore make use of treachery. This speech of *Antinous* forms a short under-plot to the Poem; it gives us pain (says *Enslathius*) for *Telemachus*, and holds us in suspense till the intimacy is unravell'd by *Amphinomus*.

The whole harangue is admirable in *Homer*: the diction is excellently suited to the temper of *Antinous*, who speaks with precipitation: His mind is in agitation and disorder, and consequently his language is abrupt, and not allowing himself time to explain his thoughts at full length, he falls into ellipses and abbreviations. For instance, he is to speak against *Telemachus*, but his contempt and resentment will not permit him to mention his name, he therefore calls him τὸν ἀνδρα; thus in μήτι κακὸν πέλωσι, δόδωκα is understood; thus likewise in this verse,

Ἄλλ'

- Strike, ere the States conven'd the foe betray,
 Our murd'rous ambush on the wat'ry way.
 Or chuse ye vagrant from their rage to fly
 395 Outcasts of earth, to breathe an unknown sky?
 The brave prevent misfortune; then be brave,
 And bury future danger in his grave.
 Returns he? ambush'd we'll his walk invade;
 Or where he hides in solitude and shade:
 400 And give the Palace to the Queen a dow'r.
 Or him she blesses in the bridal hour.
 But if submissive you resign the sway,
 Slaves to a boy, go, flatter and obey.
 Retire we instant to our native reign;
 405 Nor be the wealth of Kings consum'd in vain.

Ἄλλ' ἄγετε πρὶν κείνον ὀμνηυρίσασθαι ἀχαιῆς
 Ἔς ἀγορήν —————

the word ὀλοβρεύομαι, or ἀνίλωμαι, must be understood, to make the sense intelligible. Thus also after εἰ δ' ὑμῖν ὅδε μῦθος, ἀφάνει, to make Ἄλλα in the next sentence begin it significantly, we must supply καὶ εἰ δοκῇ καλὸν ὁ φόνος; then the sense is complete; *If this opinion displease, and his death appear not honourable,* but you would have him live, &c. otherwise ἄλλα βέλεσθαι must be constru'd like βέλεσθαι δέ; and lastly, to image the disorder of *Antinous* more strongly, *Homer* inserts a false quantity, by making the first syllable in βέλεσθαι short. *Antinous* attends not, thro' the violence of his spirit, to the words he utters, and therefore falls into this error, which excellently represents it. It is impossible to retain these Ellipses in the translation, but I have endeavour'd to shew the warmth of the speaker, by putting the words into Interrogations, which are always utter'd with vehemence, and signs of hurry and precipitation.

Then

92 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

Then wed whom choice approves : the Queen be giv'n
To some blest Prince, the Prince decreed by Heav'n.

Abash'd, the suitor train his voice attends;

'Till from his throne *Amphinomus* ascends.

410 Who o'er *Dulichium* stretch'd his spacious reign,

A land of plenty, blest with every grain :

Chief of the numbers who the Queen address,

And tho' displeasing, yet displeasing least.

Soft were his words ; his actions wisdom sway'd ;

415 Graceful a-while he paus'd, then mildly said.

O friends forbear ! and be the thought withstood :

'Tis horrible to shed imperial blood !

Consult we first th'all-seeing pow'rs above,

And the sure oracles of righteous *Jove*.

H

v. 413. *And tho' displeasing, yet displeasing least.*] We are not to gather from this expression, that *Penelope* had any particular tenderness for *Amphinomus*, but it means only that he was a person of some justice and moderation. At first view, there seems no reason why the Poet should distinguish *Amphinomus* from the rest of the Suitors, by giving him this humane character ; but in reality there is an absolute necessity for it. *Telemachus* is doom'd to die by *Antinous* : here is an intricacy form'd, and how is that Heroe to be preserv'd with probability ? The Poet ascribes a greater degree of tenderness and moderation to one of the Suitors, and by this method preserves *Telemachus*. Thus we see the least circumstance in *Homer* has its use and effect ; the art of a good Painter is visible in the smallest sketch, as well as in the largest draught.

v. 419. *And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.*] *Strabo*, lib. 7. quotes this verse of *Homer*, and tells us that some Critics thus reads it.

E

420 If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies;

If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

He said: The rival train his voice approv'd,

And rising instant to the Palace mov'd.

Arriv'd, with wild tumultuous noise they late

425 Recumbent on the shining thrones of state.

Ἐι μὲν κ' αἰθήσωσι Διὸς μέγαλοιο τομῆροι.

preferring τομῆροι to Δέμειστε; for, add they, Δέμειστε no where in *Homer* signifies Oracles, but constantly laws or councils. *Tmarus* or *Tomarus* was a mountain on which the oracle of *Jupiter* stood, and in process of time it was used to denote the Oracles themselves. *Τόμυρος* is form'd like the word *οἰκὺρος*, the former signifies *custos Tmari*, the latter *custos domus*: in this sense, *Amphino-mus* advises to consult the *Dodonean* oracles, which were given from the mountain *Tmarus*: But, adds *Strabo*, *Homer* is to be understood more plainly; and by Δέμειστε, the councils, the will and decisions of the oracles are imply'd, for those decisions were held as laws; thus βελή, as wells as Δέμειστε, signifies the *Dodonean* Oracles.

Ἐκ δρυὸς ὑφίκομοιο Διὸς βελὴν ἐπάκουσαι.

Neither is it true (observes the Scholiast upon *Strabo*) that Δέμειστε never signifies Oracles in *Homer*: for in the Hymn to *Apollo* (and *Thucydides* quotes that hymn as *Homer's*) the poet thus uses it,

— αἴγλαλοι Δέμειστα

Φοίβε' Ἀπόλλωνος —

Strabo himself uses Δέμειστιαν in this sense, *lib.* 17. and in the oracles that yet are extant, Δέμειστιαν frequently signifies *oracula reddere*: and in *Ælian* (continues the Scholiast) *lib.* 3. chap. 43, 44. εἰ σὲ Δέμειστιώσω, signifies *non tibi oracula reddam*; and *Hesychius* renders Δέμειστε, by μαντεῖα, χρήσμοι, Prophecy or Oracles.

Then

24 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

The *Medon*, conscious of their dire debates,
The murd'rous council to the Queen relates.

v. 426. ———— *Medon, conscious of their dire debates.*] After this Verse *Enslathins* recites one that is omitted in most of the late editions as spurious, at least improper.

Ἀλλῆς ἐκτὸς ἔων, οἱ δ' ἐνδοθι μῆτιν ὕφαινον.

That is, *Medon* was out of the court, whereas the Suitors form'd their council within it: The line is really to be suspected; for a little above, *Homer* directly tells us, that the Suitors left the Palace.

*Then issuing from the dome, before the gate
With clouded looks, a pale assembly sate.*

It is likewise very evident that they stood in the open air, for they discover the ship returning from the ambush, and sailing into the bay. How then can it be said of the Suitors, that they form'd their assembly in the court, οἱ δ' ἐνδοθι μῆτιν ὕφαινον. Besides, continues *Dacier*, they left the palace, and placed themselves under the lofty wall of it.

Ἐκ δ' ἦλθον μεγάροιο, παρὲν μέγα τεχνίον αὐλῆς.

How then is it possible to see the ship entering the port, when this wall must necessarily obstruct the sight? The two verses therefore evidently contradict themselves, and one of them must consequently be rejected: she would have the line read thus;

Ἀλλῆς ἐνθὸς ἔων, οἱ δ' ἐκδοθι, &c.

But all the difficulty vanishes by taking Ἀλλῆ, as it is frequently used, to denote any place open to the air, and consequently not the court, but the court-yard, and this is the proper signification of the word. Then *Medon* may stand on the outside of the wall of the court-yard, Ἀλλῆς ἐκτὸς, and over-hear the debates of the Suitors who form their council within it, or ἐνδοθι μῆτιν ὕφαινον. And as for the wall intercepting the view of the Suitors, this is merely conjecture; and 'tis more rational to imagine that the court-yard was open seaward, that so beautiful a prospect as the ocean might not be shut up from the palace of a King; or at least, the palace might stand upon such an eminence as to command the ocean.

Touch'd at the dreadful story she descends;
Her hasty steps a damsel train attends.

430 Full where the dome its shining valves expands,
Sudden before the rival pow'rs she stands:
And veiling decent with a modest shade
Her cheek, indignant to *Antinous* said.

O void of faith! of all bad men the worst!

435 Renown'd for wisdom, by th' abuse accurst!
Mistaking fame proclaims thy generous mind!
Thy deeds denote thee of the basest kind.
Wretch! to destroy a Prince that friendship gives,
While in his guest his murderer he receives:

440 Nor dread superior *Jove*, to whom belong
The cause of suppliants, and revenge of wrong,
Hast thou forgot, (ingrateful as thou art)
Who sav'd thy father with a friendly part?
Lawless he ravag'd with his martial pow'rs

445 The *Taphian* pyrates on *Thesprotia's* shores;
Enrag'd, his life, his treasures they demand;
Ulysses sav'd him from th' avenger's hand.

And

v. 447. ———— *from th' avenger's hand.*] This whole passage is thus understood by *Enslathius*; By *δμιον ὑποδδισας* *Homer* means the *Ithacans*; and he likewise affirms that the people who demanded vengeance of *Ulysses* were also the *Ithacans*. It is not here translated in this sense, the construction rather requires it

And would thou evil for his good repay?

His bed dishonour, and his house betray?

450 Afflict his Queen? and with a murd'rous hand
Destroy his?—but cease, 'tis I command.

Far hence those fears, (*Eurymachus* reply'd)

O prudent Princess! bid thy soul confide.

Breathes

to be understood of the *Thestians*, who were allies of *Ulysses*, and by virtue of that alliance demanded *Epithes*, the Father of *Antinous*, out of the hands of *Ulysses*. But I submit to the Reader's judgment.

v. 449. *His bed dishonour, and his house betray?*

Afflict his Queen, &c.]

*Tis observable that *Penelope* in the compass of two lines recites four heads of her complaint; such contractions of thought and expression being natural to persons in anger, as *Enstathius* observes; she speaks with heat, and consequently starts from thought to thought with precipitation. The whole speech is animated with a generous resentment, and she concludes at once like a Mother and a Queen; like a Mother, with affection for *Telemachus*; and like a Queen with authority, *παραδίδωκεν κροτάλια*.

v. 452. ————(*Eurymachus* reply'd).] This whole discourse of *Eurymachus* is to be understood by the way of contrariety: There is an obvious and a latent Interpretation; for instance, when he says,

His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear;

it obviously means the blood of the person who offers violence to *Telemachus*; but it may likewise mean the blood of *Telemachus*, and the construction admits both interpretations: Thus also when he says, that no person shall lay hands upon *Telemachus*, while he is alive, he means that he will do it himself: and lastly, when he adds,

*Then fear no mortal arm: if heav'n destroy,
We must resign; for Man is born to die.*

the

Breathes there a man who dares that Heroe slay,
455 While I behold the golden light of day?

No : by the righteous pow'rs of heav'n I swear,
His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear.

Ulysses, when my infant days I led,

With wine suffic'd me, and with dainties fed :

460 My gen'rous soul abhors th' ungrateful part,
And my friend's son lives dearest to my heart.

Then fear no mortal arm : If heav'n destroy,

We must resign ; for man is born to die.

Thus smooth he ended, yet his death conspir'd :

465 Then sorrowing, with sad step the Queen retir'd,

With streaming eyes all comfortless deplor'd,

Touch'd with the dear remembrance of her Lord ;

Nor ceas'd, till *Pallas* bid her sorrows fly,

And in soft slumber seal'd her flowing eye.

470 And now *Eumæus*, at the ev'ning hour,

Came late-returning to his sylvan bow'r.

the apparent signification is, that *Telemachus* has occasion only to fear a natural death ; but he means if the oracle of *Jupiter* commands them to destroy *Telemachus*, that then the Suitors will take away his life. He alludes to the foregoing speech of *Amphinomus* :

Consult we first th' all-seeing pow'rs above,

And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.

If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies ;

If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

VOL. IV.

E

Eustathius.

Ulysses

98 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVI.

Ulysses and his son had dress'd with art

A yearling boar, and gave the Gods their part,

Holy repast! That instant from the skies

475 The martial Goddess to *Ulysses* flies:

She waves her golden wand, and reassumes

From ev'ry feature every grace that blooms;

At once his vestures change; at once she sheds

Age o'er his limbs, that tremble as he treads.

480 Left to the Queen the swain with transport fly,

Unable to contain th'unruly joy.

When near he drew, the Prince breaks forth; proclaim
What tidings, friend? what speaks the voice of fame?

Say, if the Suitors measure back the main,

485 Or still in ambush thirst for blood in vain?

Whether, he cries, they measure back the flood,

Or still in ambush thirst in vain for blood,

Escap'd my care: where lawless Suitors sway,

Thy mandate born, my soul disdain'd to stay.

490 But from th'*Herrmean* height I cast a view,

Where to the port a bark high bounding flew;

Her

v. 490. *From th' Herrmean height* —————] It would be superfluous to translate all the various interpretations of this passage; it will be sufficiently intelligible to the Reader, if he looks upon it only to imply that there was an hill in *Ithaca* called the *Herrmean* hill, either because there was a Temple, Statue, or Altar of *Mercury* upon it; and so called from that Deity. It

Book XVI. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 99

Her freight a shining band : with martial air
Each pois'd his shield, and each advanc'd his spear;

It has been written that *Mercury* being the Messenger of the Gods, in his frequent journeys clear'd the roads, and when he found any stones, he threw them in a heap out of the way, and these heaps were called *ἑμαίος*, or *Mercuries*. The circumstance of his clearing the roads is somewhat odd, but why might not *Mercury* as well as *Trivia* preside over them, and have his images erected in publick ways, because he was supposed to frequent them as the messenger of the Gods?

This book takes up no more time than the space of the thirty eighth day; for *Telemachus* reaches the lodge of *Eumæus* in the morning, a little after he dispatches *Eumæus* to *Penelope*, who returns in the evening of the same day. The book in general is very beautiful in the original; the discovery of *Ulysses* to *Telemachus* is particularly tender and affecting: It has some resemblance with that of *Joseph's* discovery of himself to his brethren, and it may not perhaps be disagreeable to see how two such Authors describe the same passion. *I am Joseph, I am your brother Joseph.*

I am Ulysses, I, my Son! am he!

and he wept aloud, and he fell on his brother's neck and wept.

He wept abundant, and he wept aloud.

But it must be own'd that *Homer* falls infinitely short of *Moses*: He must be a very wicked man, that can read the History of *Joseph* without the utmost touches of compassion and transport. There is a majestick simplicity in the whole relation, and such an affecting portrait of human nature, that it overwhelms us with vicissitudes of joy and sorrow. This is a pregnant instance how much the best of heathen Writers is inferior to the divine Historian upon a parallel subject, where the two Authors endeavour to move the softer passions. The same may with equal truth be said in respect to Sublimity; not only in the instance produced by *Longinus*, viz. *Let there be light, and there was light. Let the earth be made, and the earth was made:* but in general, in the more elevated parts of Scripture, and particularly the whole book of *Job*; which, with regard both to sublimity of thought, and morality, exceeds beyond all comparison the most noble parts of *Homer*.

100 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* Book XVI.

And if aright these searching eyes survey,
495¹Th' eluded Suitors stem the wat'ry way.

The Prince well pleas'd to disappoint their wiles,
Steals on his Sire a glance, and secret smiles.
And now a short repast prepar'd, they fed,
'Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled:
500 Then to repose withdrawn, apart they lay,
And in soft sleep forgot the cares of day.



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HE



Entrevue of Telemachus and Penelope.

THE
SEVENTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

INT

E 3

The



THE A R G U M E N T.

Telemachus returning to the City, relates to Penelope the sum of his travels. Ulysses is conducted by Eumæus to the Palace, where his old dog Argus acknowledges his Master, after an absence of twenty years, and dies with joy. Eumæus returns into the country, and Ulysses remains among the Suitors, whose behaviour is described.

THE

THE
SEVENTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

SOON as *Aurora*, daughter of the dawn;
 Sprinkled with roseate light the dewy lawn;
 In haste the Prince arose, prepar'd to part;
 His hand impatient grasps the pointed dart;
 Fair on his feet the polish'd sandals shine,
 And thus he greets the master of the swine.

My friend adieu; let this short stay suffice;
 I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes,
 And end her tears, her sorrows, and her sighs.

} But

v. 8. *I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes.*] There are two reasons for the return of *Télemachus*; one, the duty a son owes to a mother; the other, to find an opportunity to put in execution

E 4

- 10 But thou attentive, what we order heed;
 This hapless stranger to the city lead;
 By publick bounty let him there be fed,
 And bless the hand that stretches forth the bread.
 To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,
 15 My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.

If

execution the designs concerted with *Ulysses*: the Poet therefore shifts the scene from the Lodge to the Palace. *Telemachus* takes not *Ulysses* along with him, for fear he should raise suspicion in the Suitors, that a person in a beggar's garb has some secret merit, to obtain the familiarity of a King's son, and this might be an occasion of a discovery; whereas when *Ulysses* afterwards appears amongst the Suitors, he is thought to be an entire stranger to *Telemachus*, which prevents all jealousy, and gives them an opportunity to carry on their measures without any particular observation. Besides, *Eumæus* is still to be kept in ignorance concerning the person of *Ulysses*? *Telemachus* therefore gives him a plausible reason for his return; namely, that his mother may no longer be in pain for his safety: This likewise excellently contributes to deceive *Eumæus*. Now as the presence of *Ulysses* in the Palace is absolutely necessary to bring about the Suitor's destruction, *Telemachus* orders *Eumæus* to conduct him thither, and by this method he comes as the friend and guest of *Eumæus*, not of *Telemachus*: Moreover, this injunction was necessary: *Eumæus* was a person of such generosity, that he would have thought himself obliged to detain his guest under his own care and inspection: nay, before he guides him towards the Palace, in the sequel of this book, he tells *Ulysses* he does it solely in compliance with the order of *Telemachus*, and acts contrary to his own inclinations.

V. 14. To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes

My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.]

This might appear too free a declaration, if *Telemachus* had made it before he knew *Ulysses*; for no circumstance could justify him for using any disregard toward the poor and stranger, according to the strict notions, and the sanctity, of the laws of hospitality amongst the antients: but as the case stands we are not the least

shock'd

Book XVII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 105

If this raise anger in the stranger's thought,
The pain of anger punishes the fault:
The very truth I undisguis'd declare:
For what so easy as to be sincere?

20 To this *Ulysses*. What the Prince requires
Of swift removal, seconds my desires.
To want like mine, the peopled town can yield
More hopes of comfort than the lonely field.

Nor fits my age to till the labour'd lands,

25 Or stoop to tasks a rural Lord demands.
Adieu! but since this ragged garb can bear
So ill, th' inclemencies of morning air,
A few hours space permit me here to stay;
My steps *Eumæus* shall to town convey,

30 With riper beams when *Phœbus* warms the day.

Thus he: nor ought *Telemachus* reply'd,
But left the mansion with a lofty stride:
Schemes of revenge his pond'ring breast elate,
Revolving deep the Suitors' sudden fate.

Shock'd at the words of *Telemachus*, we know the reason why he thus speaks: It is to conceal *Ulysses*. He is so far from shewing any particular regard to him, that he treats him with a severity in some degree contrary to the laws of hospitality; by adding, that if he complains of this hard usage, the complaint will not redress but encrease his calamity.

- 35 Arriving now before th' Imperial hall,
 He props his spear against the pillar'd wall;
 Then like a Lion o'er the threshold bounds;
 The marble pavement with his step resounds:
 His eye first glanc'd where *Euryalea* spreads.
 40 With furry spoils of beasts the splendid beds:
 She saw, she wept, she ran with eager pace,
 And reach'd her master with a long embrace.
 All crowded round the family appears,
 With wild entrancement, and ecstatic tears.
 45 Swift from above descends the royal Fair;
 (Her beauteous cheeks the blush of *Venus* wear,
 Chasten'd with coy *Diana's* pensive air)

}

Hangs

v. 46. *Her beauteous cheeks the blush of Venus wear,
 Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air.*]

This description presents us with a noble idea of the beauty and chastity of *Penelope*; her person resembles *Venus*, but *Venus* with the modest air of *Diana*. *Dionysius Halicarn.* takes notice of the beauty and softness of these two verses.

Ἡ δ' ἦν ἐκ θαλάμοιο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια
 Ἀρτέμιδι μέλας, ἢ δὲ χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ.

When *Homer* (remarks that Author) paints a beautiful face, or an engaging object, he chuses the softest vowels, and most smooth and flowing femivowels: He never clogs the pronunciation with rough sounds, and a collision of untunable consonants, but every syllable, every letter conspires to exhibit the beauty of the object he endeavours to represent: There are no less than three and thirty vowels in two lines, and no more than twenty nine consonants.

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 107

Hangs o'er her son; in his embraces dies;

Rains kisses on his neck, his face, his eyes :

50 Few words she spoke, tho' much she had to say,
And scarce those few, for tears, could force their way.

Light of my eyes ! he comes ! unhop'd-for joy !

Has heav'n from *Pylas* brought my lovely boy ?

So snatch'd from all our cares !—Tell, hast thou known

55 Thy father's fate, and tell me all thy own.

Oh dearest, most rever'd of womankind !

Cease with those tears to melt a manly mind,

(Reply'd the Prince) nor be our fates deplor'd,

From death and treason to thy arms restor'd.

60 Go bathe, and rob'd in white, ascend the tow'rs;

With all thy handmaids thank th' immortal Pow'rs ;

sonants, which makes the verses flow away with an agreeable smoothness and harmony.

Penelope, we see, embraces her son with the utmost affection: *Kissing the lip* was not in fashion in the days of *Homer*; *No one* (remarks the Bishop) *ever kisses the lip or mouth*. *Penelope* here kisses her son's eyes, and his head; that is, his cheek, or perhaps forehead: and *Eumæus*, in the preceding book, embraces the hands, eyes, and head of *Telemachus*. But for the comfort of the Ladies, I rejoice to observe that all these were ceremonious kisses from a mother to a son, or from an inferior to a superior: This therefore is no argument that lovers thus embrac'd, nor ought it to be brought as a reason why the present manner of salutation should be abrogated. *Madam Dacier* has been so tender as to keep it a secret from the men, that there ever was a time in which the modern method of kissing was not in fashion; she highly deserves their thanks and gratitude for it.

To ev'ry God vow hecatombs to bleed,
And call *Jove's* vengeance on their guilty deed.

While to th' assembled council I repair ;

65 A stranger sent by Heav'n attends me there ;

My new-accepted guest I haste to find,

Now to *Piræus'* honour'd charge consign'd.

The matron heard, nor was his word in vain.

She bath'd ; and rob'd in white, with all her train,

70 To ev'ry God vow'd hecatombs to bleed,

And call'd *Jove's* vengeance on the guilty deed.

Arm'd with his lance the Prince then past the gate ;

Two dogs behind, a faithful guard, await :

v. 65. *A stranger sent by Heav'n attends me there.*] There is a vein of sincere piety that runs thro' the words and actions of *Telemachus* : he has no sooner delivered his mother from her uneasy apprehensions concerning his safety, but he proceeds to another act of virtue toward *Theachlymenus*, whom he had taken into his protection : He performs his duty towards men and towards the Gods. It is by his direction that *Penelope* offers up her devotions for success, and thanks for his return. It is he who prescribes the manner of it ; namely, by washing the hands, in token of the purity of mind requir'd by those who supplicate the Deities ; and by putting on clean garments, to shew the reverence and regard with which their souls ought to be possess'd when they appear before the Gods. I am not sensible that the last ceremony is often mentioned in other parts of *Homer* ; yet I doubt not but it was practis'd upon all religious solemnities. The moral of the whole is, that piety is a sure way to victory : *Telemachus* appears every where a good man, and for this reason he becomes at last an happy one ; and his calamities contribute to his glory.

Pallas

Book XVII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 109

Pallas his form with grace divine improves :

75 The gazing crowd admires him as he moves.

Him, gath'ring round, the haughty Suitors greet
With semblance fair, but inward deep deceit.

Their false addresses gen'rous he deny'd,

Past on, and sate by faithful *Mentor's* side;

80 With *Antiphus*, and *Halitherses* sage,

(His father's counsellors, rever'd for age.)

Of his own fortunes, and *Ulysses'* fame,

Much ask'd the Seniors ; till *Piræus* came—

The stranger-guest pursu'd him clos'd behind;

85 Whom when *Telamachus* beheld, he join'd.

He, (when *Piræus* ask'd for slaves to bring

The gifts and treasures of the *Spartan* King)

Thus thoughtful answer'd : Those we shall not move,

Dark and unconscious of the will of *Jove* :

90 We know not yet the full event of all :

Stabb'd in his Palace if your Prince must fall,

Us, and our house if treason must o'erthrow,

Better a friend possess them, than a foe :

If death to these, and vengeance heav'n decree,

95 Riches are welcome then, not else, to me.

'Till then, retain the gifts.—The Heroe said,

And in his hand the willing stranger led.

Then

110 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

Then disarray'd, the shining bath they sought,
With unguents smooth, of polish'd marble wrought;

100 Obedient handmaids with assiduous toil

Supply the limpid wave, and fragrant oil:
Then o'er their limbs refulgent robes they threw,
And fresh from bathing, to their seats withdrew.

The golden ew'r a Nymph attendant brings,

105 Replenish'd from the pure, translucent springs;

With copious streams that golden ew'r supplies
A silver laver of capacious size.

They wash: the table, in fair order spread,
Is pil'd with viands and the strength of bread.

110 Full opposite, before the folding gate;

The pensive mother sits in humble state;
Lowly she sate, and with dejected view
The fleecy threads her ivory fingers drew.
The Prince and stranger shar'd the genial feast,

115 'Till now the rage of thirst and hunger ceas'd.

When thus the Queen. My son! my only friend!

Say, to my mournful couch shall I ascend?

(The

v. 117. *Say to my mournful couch, &c.*] Penelope had requested Telemachus to give her an account of his voyage to Pyle, and of what he had heard concerning Ulysses. He there wav'd the discourse, because the Queen was in public with her female attendants: by this conduct the Poet sustains both their characters;

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 112

(The couch deserted now a length of years;
The couch, for ever water'd with my tears)

120 Say wilt thou not (ere yet the Suitor-crowd
Return, and riot shakes our walls a-new)

Say wilt thou not the least account afford?

The least glad tidings of my absent Lord?

To her the youth. We reach'd the *Pylæan* plains,

125 Where *Nestor*, shepherd of his people, reigns.

All arts of tenderness to him are known,

Kind to *Ulysses'* race as to his own;

No father, with a fonder grasp of joy,

Strains to his bosom his long-absent boy.

130 But all unknown, if yet *Ulysses* breathe,

Or glide a spectre in the realms beneath?

For farther search, his rapid steeds transport

My lengthen'd journey to the *Spartan* court.

Penelope is impatient to hear of *Ulysses*, and this agrees with the affection of a tender wife; but the discovery being unseasonable, *Telemachus* forbears to satisfy her curiosity; in which he acts like a wise man. Here (observes *Enslathus*) she gently reproaches him for not satisfying her impatience concerning her husband; she insinuates that it is a piece of cruelty to permit her still to grieve, when it is in his power to give her comfort; and this induces him to gratify her desires. It ought to be observ'd, that *Homer* chuses a proper time for this relation; it was necessary that the Suitors should be ignorant of the story of *Ulysses*; *Telemachus* therefore makes it when they are withdrawn to their sports, and when none were present but friends.

There

112 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

- There *Argive Helen* I beheld, whose charms
 135 (So Heav'n decreed) ingag'd the Great in arms.
 My cause of coming told, he thus rejoin'd;
 And still his words live perfect in my mind.
 Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train
 An absent Heroe's nuptial joys prophane!
 140 So with her young, amid the woodland shades,
 A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,
 Leaves in that fatal lair her tender fawns,
 And climbs the cliff, or feeds along the lawns;
 Mean-time returning, with remorseless sway
 145 The Monarch savage tends the panting prey:

v. 134. *There Argive Helen I beheld, whose charms
 (So Heav'n decreed) &c.*]

Enfathius takes notice of the candid behaviour of *Telemachus* with respect to *Helen*: She had receiv'd him courteously, and he testifies his gratitude, by ascribing the calamities she drew upon her country to the decree of heav'n, not to her immodesty: This is particularly decent in the mouth of *Telemachus*, because he is now acquainted with his father's return; otherwise he could not have mention'd her name but to her dishonour, who had been the occasion of his dearth.

v. 138. *Heav'ns! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train, &c.*] These verses are repeated from the fourth *Odyssey*; and are not without a good effect, they cannot fail of comforting *Penelope*, by assuring her that *Ulysses* is alive, and restrain'd by *Calypso* involuntarily; they give her hopes of his return, and the satisfaction of hearing his glory from the mouth of *Mentor*. The conciseness of *Telemachus* is likewise remarkable; he re-capitulates in thirty eight lines the subject of almost three books, the third, the fourth and fifth; he selects every circumstance that can please *Penelope*, and drops those that would give her pain.

With

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 113

With equal fury, and with equal fame,

Shall great *Ulysses* re-assert his claim.

O *Jove*! Supreme! whom men and Gods revere;

And thou whose lustre gilds the rowling sphere!

150 With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid

The Chief adopted by the martial maid!

Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,

As when, contending on the *Lesbian* shore,

His prowess *Philomelides* confess,

155 And loud-acclaiming *Greeks* the victor blest:

Then soon th'invaders of his bed, and throne,

Their love presumptuous shall by death atone.

Now what you question of my antient friend,

With truth I answer; thou the truth attend.

160 Learn what I heard the * sea-born Seer relate,

Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate.

Sole in an Isle, imprison'd by the main,

The sad survivor of his num'rous train,

Ulysses lies; detain'd by magic charms,

165 And prest unwilling in *Calypso's* arms.

No sailors there, no vessels to convey,

Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way——

This told *Atrides*, and he told no more.

Thence safe I voyag'd to my native shore.

He

- 170 He ceas'd; nor made the pensive Queen reply,
 But droop'd her head, and drew a secret sigh,
 When *Theoclymenus* the seer began :
 Oh suffering consort of the suffering man!
 What human knowledge could, those Kings might tell;
 175 But I the secrets of high Heav'n reveal.
 Before the first of Gods be this declar'd,
 Before the board whose blessings we have shar'd;

v. 172. *When Theoclymenus the seer began, &c.*] It is with great judgment that the Poet here introduces *Theoclymenus*; he is a person that has no direct relation to the story of the *Odyssey*, yet because he appears accidentally in it, *Homer* unites him very artificially with it, that he may not appear to no purpose, and as an useless ornament. He here speaks as an *Augur*, and what he utters contributes to the perseverance of *Penelope* in resisting the addresses of the Suitors, by assuring her of the return of *Ulysses*; and consequently in some degree *Theoclymenus* promotes the principal action. But it may be said, if it was necessary that *Penelope* should be informed of his return, why does not *Telemachus* assure her of it, who was fully acquainted with the truth? The answer is, that *Penelope* is not to be fully inform'd, but only encouraged by a general hope: *Theoclymenus* speaks from his art, which may possibly be liable to error; but *Telemachus* must have spoken from knowledge, which would have been contrary to the injunctions of *Ulysses*, and might have prov'd fatal by an unreasonable discovery: It was therefore judicious in the Poet to put the assurance of the return of *Ulysses* into the mouth of *Theoclymenus*, and not of *Telemachus*.

There is an expression in this speech, which in the *Greek* is remarkable; literally it is to be render'd, *Ulysses is now sitting or creeping in Ithaca*, ἤμωρ ἢ ἑστῶν; that is, *Ulysses* is return'd and conceal'd: It is taken from the posture of a person in the act of endeavouring to hide himself: he sits down or creeps upon the ground. *Enslathius* explains it by κρύφα, καὶ ἢ κατ' ἐπὶ θῶν βαδίζων.

Witness

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 115

Witness the genial rites, and witness all
This house holds sacred in her ample wall!

180 Ev'n now this instant, great *Ulysses* lay'd
At rest, or wand'ring in his country's shade,
Their guilty deeds, in hearing, and in view
Secret revolves; and plans the vengeance due.
Of this sure Auguries the Gods bestow'd,

185 When first our vessel anchor'd in your road.
Succeed those omens Heav'n! (the Queen rejoind)
So shall our bounties speak a grateful mind;
And ev'ry envy'd happiness attend
The man, who calls *Penelope* his friend.

190 Thus commun'd they : while in the marble court
(Scene of their insolence) the Lords resort ;
Athwart the spacious square each tries his art
To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.

v. 192.

—————each tries his art
To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.]

Epistatius remarks, that tho' the Suitors were abandon'd to luxury, vice, and intemperance, yet they exercise themselves in laudable sports: They toss the quoit, or throw the javelin, which are both heroic diversions, and form the body into strength and activity. This is owing to the virtue of the age, not the persons: such sports were fashionable, and therefore used by the Suitors, and not because they were heroic. However they may instruct us never to give our selves up to idleness and inaction; but to make our very diversions subservient to nobler views, and turn a pleasure into a virtue.

Now

Now did the hour of sweet repast arrive,
195 And from the field the victim flocks they drive:

Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them best,
And honour'd with a portion of their feast)
To bid the banquet interrupts their play.

Swift to the hall they haste; aside they lay
200 Their garments, and succinct, the victims slay.

Then sheep and goats and bristly porkers bled,
And the proud steer was o'er the marble spread.

While thus the copious banquet they provide,
Along the road conversing side by side,

205 Proceed *Ulysses* and the faithful swain:

When thus *Eumæus*, gen'rous and humane.

v. 196. *Medon the herald, one who pleas'd them best.*] We may observe that the character of *Medon* is very particular; he is at the same time a favourite of the Suitors, and *Telemachus*, persons entirely opposite in their interests. It seldom happens that any man can please two parties, without acting an insincere part: *Atticus* was indeed equally acceptable to the two factions of *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, but it was because he seem'd neutral, and acted as if they were both his friends; or rather he was a man of such eminent virtues, that they esteem'd it an honour to have him thought their friend. *Homer* every where represents *Medon* as a person of integrity; he is artful, but not criminal: no doubt but he made all compliances, that consist'd with probity, with the Suitor's dispositions; by this method he sav'd *Penelope* more effectually than if he had shew'd a more rigid virtue. He made himself master of their hearts by an insinuating behaviour, and was a spy upon their actions. *Eusebius* compares him to a buskin that fits both legs, *ὅσῳ τις κέδοντος*; he seems to have been an *Anti-Cato*, and practis'd a virtuous gayety.

To

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 117

To town, observant of our Lord's behest,
Now let us speed; my friend, no more my guest!
Yet like my self I wish'd thee here preferr'd,

10 Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.

But much to raise my master's wrath I fear;
The wrath of Princes ever is severe.

Then heed his will, and be our journey made
While the broad beams of *Phœbus* are display'd.

15 Or ere brown ev'ning spreads her chilly shade.

Just thy advice, (the prudent Chief rejoin'd)

And such as suits the dictate of my mind.

Lead on: but help me to some staff to stay

My feeble step, since rugged is the way.

}
}

V. 210. *Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.*] Such little traits as these are very delightful; for the Reader knowing that the person to whom this offer is made, is *Ulysses*, cannot fail of being diverted to see the honest and loyal *Eupeus* promising to make his master and King the keeper of his herds or flocks, *εὐεὺς μὲν*; and this is offer'd as a piece of good fortune or dignity.

V. 215. ———— *Ere ev'ning spreads her chilly shade.*] *Eupeus* gathers from these words, that the time of the action of the *Odyssey* was in the end of autumn, or beginning of winter, when the mornings and evenings are cold: Thus *Ulysses*, in the beginning of this book, makes the coldness of the morning an excuse for not going with *Telemachus*; his rage being but an ill defense against it: and here *Eupeus* mentions the coldness of the evening, as a reason why they should begin their journey in the heat of the day; so that it was now probably about ten of the clock, and they arrive at *Ithaca* at noon: from hence we may conjecture, that the lodge of *Eupeus* was five or six miles from the city; that is, about a two hours walk.

Across

118 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

- 220 Across his shoulders, then, the scrip he flung,
Wide patch'd, and fasten'd by a twisted thong,
A staff *Eumæus* gave. Along the way
Cheerly they fare: Behind, the keepers stay;
These with their watchful dogs (a constant guard)
- 225 Supply his absence, and attend the herd.
And now his city strikes the Monarch's eyes,
Alas! how chang'd! a man of miseries;
Propt on a staff, a beggar old and bare,
In rags dishonest flutt'ring with the air!
- 230 Now pass'd the rugged road, they journey down
The cavern'd way descending to the town,

v. 224. *These with their watchful dogs*————] It is certain that if these little particulars had been omitted, there would have been no chasma in the connection; why then does *Homer* insert such circumstances unnecessarily, which it must be allowed are of no importance, and add nothing to the perfection of the story? nay, they are such as may be thought trivial, and unworthy the dignity of Epic Poetry. But, as *Dacier* very well observes, they are a kind of painting: Were a Painter to draw this subject, he would undoubtedly insert into the piece these herdsmen and dogs after the manner of *Homer*; they are natural ornaments, and consequently are no disgrace either to the Poet or the Painter.

It is observable that *Homer* gives us an exact draught of the country; he sets before us, as in a picture, the city, the circular grove of poplars adjacent, the fountain falling from a rock, and the Altar sacred to the Nymphs, erected on the point of it. We are as it were transported into *Ithaca*, and travel with *Ulysses* and *Eumæus*: *Homer* verifies the observation of *Horace* above all Poets; namely, that Poetry is Painting.

Where,

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 119

- Where, from the rock, with liquid lapse distills
 A limpid fount; that spread in parting rills
 Its current thence to serve the city brings:
 235 An useful work! adorn'd by antient Kings.
Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor there
 In sculptur'd stone immortaliz'd their care,
 In marble urns receiv'd it from above,
 And shaded with a green surrounding grove;
 240 Where silver alders, in high arches twin'd,
 Drink the cool stream, and tremble to the wind.
 Beneath, sequester'd to the nymphs, is seen
 A mossie altar, deep embower'd in green;
 Where constant vows by travellers are pay'd,
 245 And holy horrors solemnize the shade.
 Here with his goats, (not vow'd to sacred flame,
 But pamper'd luxury) *Melanthinus* came;

v. 236. *Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor* —————] Public benefactions demand public honours and acknowledgments; for this reason *Homer* makes an honourable mention of these three brothers. *Ithaca* was a small Island, and destitute of plenty of fresh water; this fountain therefore was a public good to the whole region about it; and has given immortality to the Authors of it. They were the sons of *Pterelans* (as *Eustathius* informs us) *Ithacus* gave name to the country, *Neritus* to a mountain, and *Polyctor* to a place call'd *Polyctorium*.

Two grooms attend him. With an envious look
He ey'd the stranger, and imperious spoke.

250 The good old proverb how this pair fulfill!

One rogue is usher to another still.

Heav'n with a secret principle indu'd

Mankind, to seek their own similitude.

Where goes the swine-herd with that ill-look'd guest?

255 That giant-glutton, dreadful at a feast!

Full many a post have those broad shoulders worn,

From ev'ry great man's gate repuls'd with scorn?

To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,

'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.

To

v. 258. *To no brave prize aspir'd the worthless swain,*

'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.]

Dacier is very singular in her interpretation of this passage: She imagines it has a reference to the games practis'd amongst the Suitors, and to the rewards of the victors, which were usually Tripods and beautiful captives. "Thinkest thou (says Melanthius) that this beggar will obtain the victory in our sports, and that they will give him as the reward of his valour, some beautiful slave, or some precious Tripod?" But in *Homer* there is nothing that gives the least countenance to this explication: He thus literally speaks: This fellow by going from door to door will meet with correction, while he begs meanly for a few scraps, not for things of price, such as a captive or Tripod. *Eustathius* explains it as spoken in contempt of *Ulysses*; that he appears to be such a vile person, as to have no ambition or hope to expect any thing better than a few scraps, nor to aspire to the rewards of nobler strangers, such as captives or Tripods. *Ἀκοιοι*, says the same Author, are the minuteft crumbs of bread, *σμικρότατοι ψωμοί*. I am persuaded, that the Reader will subscribe to the judgment of *Eustathius*, if he considers the construction, and that *ἀσπας* and *λί-*

βυτας

- 260 To beg, than work, he better understands;
 Or we perhaps might take him off thy hands.
 For any office could the slave be good,
 To cleanse the fold, or help the kids to food,
 If any labour those big joints could learn;
 265 Some whey, to wash his bowels, he might earn.
 To cringe, to whine, his idle hands to spread,
 Is all, by which that graceless maw is fed.

βντας are govern'd by *αἰτίζων* as effectually as *ἀκούων*, and therefore must refer to the same act of begging, not of claiming by victory in the games; *αἰτίζων* is not a word that can here express a reward, but only a charity: besides, would it not be absurd to say that a Beggar goes from door to door asking alms, and not rewards bestow'd upon victors in public exercises? the words *πολλῶσι φιλῶσι* make the sense general, they denote the life of a beggar, which is to go from door to door, and consequently they ought not to be confin'd solely to the Suitors, and if not, they can have no reference to any games, or to any rewards bestowed upon such occasions. Besides it is scarce to be conceiv'd that *Melanthius* could think this Beggar capable of being admitted into the company, much less into the diversions of the Suitors, who were all persons of high birth and station. 'Tis true, *Lib. 21. Ulysses* is permitted to try the bow, but this is through the peculiar grace of *Telemachus*, who knew the Beggar to be *Ulysses*; and entirely contrary to their injunctions.

From this Passage we may correct an error in *Hesychius*: *ἀορις* (says he) are *γυναικες και τριποδες*: the sentence is evidently maim'd, for *Hesychius* undoubtedly thus wrote it, *ἀορις γυναικες λιβνται*, for thus (adds he) *Homer* uses it:

— ἐν ἀορις ἐδὲ λιβντας.

that is (says *Hesychius*) *ἐγυναικας ἐδὲ τριποδας*, referring to this Verse of the *Odyssey*.

122 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

Yet hear me! if thy impudence but dare
Approach yon walls, I prophesy thy fare:

270 Dearly, full dearly shalt thou buy thy bread
With many a footstool thund'ring at thy head.

He thus: nor insolent of word alone,

Spurn'd with his rustic heel his King unknown;

Spurn'd, but not mov'd: He, like a pillar stood,

275 Nor stirr'd an inch, contemptuous, from the road:

Doubtful, or with his staff to strike him dead,

Or greet the pavement with his worthless head.

Short was that doubt; to quell his rage inur'd,

The Heroe stood self-conquer'd, and endur'd.

v. 279. *The Heroe stood self-conquer'd, and endur'd.*] Homer excellently sustains the character of *Ulysses*; he is a Man of patience, and master of all his passions; he is here misused by one of his own servants, yet is so far from returning the injury, that he stifles the sense of it, without speaking one word: 'Tis true he is describ'd as having a conflict in his Soul; but this is no derogation to his character: not to feel like a man, is Insensibility, not Virtue; but to repress the emotions of the heart, and keep them within the bounds of moderation, this argues wisdom, and turns an injury into a virtue and glory. There is an excellent contrast between the benevolent *Eumæus*, and the insolent *Melanthius*. *Eumæus* resents the Outrage of *Melanthius* more than *Ulysses*; he is moved with indignation, but how does he express it? not by railing, but by an appeal to Heaven in a prayer: A conduct worthy to be imitated in more enlighten'd ages. The word *αἰγλαίας* here bears a peculiar signification; it does not imply Voluptuousness as usually, but Pride, and means that *Ulysses* would spoil his haughty airs, if he should ever return: This interpretation agrees with what follows, where *Eumæus* reproaches him for despising his rural charge, and aspiring to politeness, or as we express it, to be a Man of the Town.

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 123

280 But hateful of the wretch, *Rumour* heav'd

His hands obtesting, and this pray'r conceiv'd.

Daughters of *Jove*! who from th' æthereal bow'rs

Descend to swell the springs, and feed the flow'rs!

Nymphs of this fountain! to whose sacred names

285 Our rural victims mount in blazing flames!

To whom *Ulysses'* piety prefer'd

The yearly firstlings of his flock, and herd;

Succeed my wish; your votary restore:

Oh be some God his convoy to our shore!

290 Due pains shall punish then this slave's offence,

And humble all his airs of insolence,

Who proudly stalking, leaves the herds at large,

Commences courtier, and neglects his charge.

What mutters he? (*Melampus* sharp rejoins)

295 This crafty miscreant big with dark designs?

The day shall come; nay, 'tis already near,

When slave! to sell thee at a price too dear,

Must be my care; and hence transport thee o'er,

(A load and scandal to this happy shore.)

300 Oh! that as surely great *Apollo's* dart,

Or some brave Suitor's sword, might pierce the heart

Of the proud son; as that we stand this hour

In lasting safety from the father's pow'r.

124 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* Book XVII.

So spoke the wretch; but shunning farther fray,
 305 Turn'd his proud step, and left them on their way,
 Strait to the feast-full palace he repair'd,
 Familiar enter'd, and the banquet shar'd;
 Beneath *Eurymachus*, his patron lord,
 He took his place, and Plenty heap'd the board.
 310 Mean-time they heard, soft-circling in the sky,
 Sweet Airs ascend, and heav'nly minstrelsie;
 (For *Phemius* to the Lyre attun'd the strain :)
Ulysses harkned, then address the swain.

Well may this Palace admiration claim,
 315 Great, and respondent to the master's fame!
 Stage above stage th' imperial structure stands,
 Holds the chief honours and the town commands :

v. 308. *Beneath Eurymachus*——*He took his place.*——]
 We may gather from hence the truth of an observation formerly made, That *Melanthius*, *Eumans*, &c. were persons of distinction, and their offices posts of honour : we see *Melanthius*, who had charge of the Goats of *Ulysses*, is a companion for Princes.

The reason why *Melanthius* in particular associates himself with *Eurymachus* is, an intrigue which that Prince holds with *Melantho* his sister, as appears from the following Book. There is a confederacy and league between them, and we find they all suffer condign punishment in the end of the *Odyssey*.

High

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 125

High walls and battlements the courts inclose,
And the strong gates defy a host of foes.

320 Far other cares its dwellers now employ ;

The throng'd assembly, and the feast of joy :

I see the smokes of sacrifice aspire,

And hear (what graces ev'ry feast) the Lyre.

Then thus *Eumæus*. Judge we which were best ;

325 Amidst yon revellers a sudden guest

Chuse you to mingle, while behind I stay ?

Or I first ent'ring introduce the way ?

Wait for a space without, but wait not long ;

This is the house of violence and wrong :

330 Some rude insult thy rev'rend age may bear ;

For like their lawless lords, the servants are.

Just is, oh friend ! thy caution, and address

(Reply'd the Chief) to no unheeded breast ;

v. 318. *High walls and battlements, &c.*] We have here a very particular draught or plan of the palace of *Ulysses*; it is a kind of castle, at once design'd for strength and magnificence: this we may gather from *ὑψηλὸς αἶσος*, which *Hesychius* explains by *ὑψηλὸς αἶσος*, *ὑψηλός*, not easily to be surmounted, or forc'd by arms.

Homer artfully introduces *Ulysses* struck with wonder at the beauty of the palace; this is done to confirm *Eumæus* in the opinion that *Ulysses* is really the Beggar he appears to be, and a perfect stranger among the *Ithacans*: Thus also when he complains of hunger, he speaks the language of a Beggar, as *Eustathius* remarks, to persuade *Eumæus* that he takes his journey to the Court, solely out of want and hunger.

126 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

The wrongs and injuries of base mankind

335 Fresh to my sense, and always in my mind.

The bravely-patient to no fortune yields:

On rolling oceans, and in fighting fields,

Storms have I past, and many a stern debate;

And now in humbler scene submit to Fate.

340 What cannot *Went*? the best she will expose,

And I am learn'd in all her train of woes;

She fills with navies, hosts, and loud alarms

The sea, the land, and shakes the world with arms?

Thus, near the gates conferring as they drew,

345 *Argus*, the Dog, his antient master knew;

He,

v. 349. *Argus, the Dog, his antient master knew, &c.*] This whole Episode has fallen under the ridicule of the Critics; Monsieur *Perault* in particular: "The Dunghill before the Palace" (says that Author) is more proper for a Peasant than a King; "and it is beneath the dignity of Poetry to describe the Dog *Argus* almost devour'd with vermin." It must be allow'd, that such a familiar Episode could not have been properly introduced into the *Iliad*: It is writ in a nobler style, and distinguish'd by a boldness of sentiments and diction; whereas the *Odyssey* descends to the Familiar, and is calculated more for common than heroic life. What *Homer* says of *Argus* is very natural, and I do not know any thing more beautiful or more affecting in the whole Poem; I dare appeal to every person's judgment, if *Argus* be not as justly and properly represented, as the noblest figure in it. It is certain that the vermin which *Homer* mentions would debase our Poetry, but in the *Greek* that very word is noble and sonorous, *Kuagelisiav*: But how is the objection concerning the Dunghill to be answer'd? We must have recourse to the simplicity of manners amongst the Antients, who thought nothing mean, that was of use to life. *Ithaca* was a barren Country, full of Rocks and

Book XVII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 127

He, not unconscious of the voice, and tread,
Lifts to the sound his ear, and rears his head.
Bred by *Ulysses*, nourish'd at his board,
But ah! not fated long to please his Lord!

350 To him, his swiftness and his strength were vain;
The voice of Glory call'd him o'er the main.
'Till then in ev'ry sylvan chace renown'd,
With *Argus*, *Argus*, rung the woods around;
With him the youth pursu'd the goat or fawn,
355 Or trac'd the mazy leveret o'er the lawn.

Now left to man's ingratitude he lay,
Un-hous'd, neglected, in the publick way;
And where on heaps the rich manure was spread,
Obscene with Reptiles, took his sordid bed.

360 He knew his Lord; he knew, and strove to meet,
In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet;

Yet

and Mountains, and ow'd its fertility chiefly to cultivation, and for this reason such circumstantial cases were necessary. 'Tis true such a description now is more proper for a Peasant than a King, but antiently it was no disgrace for a King to perform with his own hands, what is now left only to Peasants. We read of a Dictator taken from the plough, and why may not a King as well manure his field as plough it, without receding from his dignity? *Virgil* has put the same thing into a Precept:

Ne saturare fimo pingui potest sola.

v. 361. *In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet.*] It may seem that this circumstance was inserted casually, or at least only

128 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

Yet (all he could) his tail, his ears, his eyes

Salute his master, and confess his joys.

Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul ;

365 Adown his cheek a tear unbidden stole,

Stole unperceiv'd; he turn'd his head, and dry'd

The drop humane: then thus impassion'd cry'd.

only to shew the age and infirmity of *Argus*: but there is a further intent in it: If the Dog had ran to *Ulysses* and fawn'd upon him, it would have rais'd a strong suspicion in *Eumæus* that he was not such a stranger to the *Ithacans* as he pretended, but some person in disguise; and this might have occasioned an unseasonable discovery. *Enslathins*.

v. 364. *Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul.*] I confess my self touch'd with the tenderness of these tears in *Ulysses*; I would willingly think that they proceed from a better principle than the weakness of human nature, and are an instance of a really virtuous and compassionate disposition.

—————*ἀγαθὸν δ' ἀγιδάχματα ἀνδρῶν.*

Good men are easily mov'd to Tears: In my judgment, *Ulysses* appears more amiable while he weeps over his faithful Dog, than when he drives an army of enemies before him: That shews him to be a great Heroe, This a good Man. It was undoubtedly an instance of an excellent disposition in one of the Fathers who pray'd for the *Grace of Tears*.

—————*mollissima corda*

Humano generi dare se natura fatetur

Qua lachrymas dedit, hac nostri pars optima sensus.

Juv. Sat. 15.

And Dryden,

Each gentle mind the soft infection se't,

For richest metals are most apt to melt.

What

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 129

What noble beast in this abandon'd state
Lies here all helpless at *Ulysses'* gate?

370 His bulk and beauty speak no vulgar praise;

If, as he seems, he *was* in better days,

Some care his Age deserves: Or was he priz'd

For worthless beauty? therefore now despis'd?

Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of state;

375 And always cherish'd by their friends, the Great.

Not *Argus* so, (*Eumæus* thus rejoin'd)

But serv'd a master of a nobler kind,

Who never, never shall behold him more!

Long, long since perish'd on a distant shore!

380 Oh had you seen him, vig'rous, bold and young,

Swift as a stag, and as a lion strong;

Him no fell Savage on the plain withstood,

None 'scap'd him, bosom'd in the gloomy wood;

v. 374. *Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of state,
And always cherish'd by their friends, the Great.*

It is the Greek *ἀνακτες*, or *Kings*; but the word is not to be taken in too strict a sense; it implies all persons of distinction, or *ἐκαστοτέρους*, like the word *Rex* in *Horace*.

Regibus hic mos est ubi equos mercantur.

And *Regina* in *Terence* (as *Dacier* observes) is used in the same manner.

————— *Eunuchum porro dixi velle tes
Quia sola nutatur his regina.*

His eye how piercing, and his scent how true,

385 To winde the vapour in the tainted dew?

Such, when *Ulysses* left his natal coast,

Now years un-nerve him, and his lord is lost.

The women keep the gen'rous creature bare,

A sleek and idle race is all their care:

390 The master gone, the servants what restrains?

Or dwells Humanity where riot reigns?

Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day

Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.

This

v. 392.

Whatever day

Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.]

This is a very remarkable sentence, and commonly found to be true. *Longinus* in his enquiry into the decay of human wit quotes it. "Servitude, be it never so justly established, is a kind of prison, wherein the soul shrinks in some measure, and diminishes by constraint: it has the same effect with the boxes in which dwarfs are inclos'd which not only hinder the body from its growth, but make it less by the constriction. It is observable that all the great Orators flourish'd in Republics, and indeed what is there that raises the souls of great men more than Liberty? In other governments men commonly become instead of Orators, pompous flatterers: A man born in servitude may be capable of other sciences; but no slave can ever be an Orator; for while the mind is depressed and broken by slavery, it will never dare to think or say any thing bold and noble; all the vigour evaporates, and it remains as it were confin'd in a prison. *Etiā fera animalia, si clausa teneas, virtutis obliuiscuntur.* Tacit. Hist. lib. 4.

These verses are quoted in *Plato, lib. 6. de legibus*, but somewhat differently from our editions.

Ἡμεῖς γὰρ τε τῶν ἀπαμειβόμενων ἡρώων ἕως

Ἀνδρῶν ἑς αὖ δὴν, &c.

However

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 131

This said, the honest herdsman strode before:

395 The musing Monarch pauses at the door:

The Dog whom Fate had granted to behold

His Lord, when twenty tedious years had roll'd,

Takes a last look, and having seen him, dies;

So clos'd for ever faithful *Argus'* eyes!

400 And now *Telemachus*, the first of all,

Observ'd *Eumæus* entering in the hall;

Distant he saw, across the shady Dome;

Then gave a sign, and beckon'd him to come.

There stood an empty seat, where late was plac'd

405 In order due; the steward of the feast,

However this aphorism is to be understood only generally, not universally; *Eumæus* who utters it is an instance to the contrary, who retains his virtue in a state of subjection; and *Plato* speaks to the same purpose, asserting that some slaves have been found of such virtue as to be prefer'd to a son or brother; and have often preserv'd their masters and their families.

v. 399. *So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes!*] It has been a question what occasion'd the death of *Argus*, at the instant he saw *Ulysses*: *Enslathius* imputes it to the joy he felt at the sight of his master. But there has another objection been started against *Homer*, for ascribing so long a life as twenty years to *Argus*, and that dogs never surpass the fifteenth year; but this is an error; *Aristotle* affirms, that some dogs live two and twenty, and other Naturalists subscribe to his judgment. *Enslathius* tells us, that other Writers agree, that some dogs live twenty four years: *Pliny* thus writes, *Canes Laconici vivunt annis decem, fœmina duodecim, cætera genera quindecim annos, aliquando viginti*. *Madama Dacier* mentions some of her own knowledge that liv'd twenty three years; and the Translator, not to fall short of these illustrious examples, has known one that died at twenty-two, big with puppies.

132 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.*

(Who now was busied carving round the board)

Eumæus took, and plac'd it near his Lord.

Before him instant was the banquet spread,

And the bright basket pil'd with loaves of bread.

410 Next came *Ulysses*, lowly at the door,

A figure despicable, old, and poor,

In squalid vests with many a gaping rent,

Propt on a staff, and trembling as he went.

Then, resting on the threshold of the gate,

415 Against a cypress pillar lean'd his weight;

(Smooth'd by the workman to a polish'd plain)

The thoughtful Son beheld, and call'd his swain:

These viands, and this bread, *Eumæus*! bear,

And let yon mendicant our plenty share:

420 Then let him circle round the Suitors' board,

And try the bounty of each gracious lord.

Bold let him ask, encourag'd thus by me;

How ill, alas! do want and shame agree?

His

v. 423. *How ill, alas! do want and shame agree?*] We are not to imagine that *Homer* is here recommending immodesty: but to understand him as speaking of a decent assurance, in opposition to a faulty shame or bashfulness. The verse in the Greek is remarkable.

Αἰδοῦς δ' ἐν ἀγαθῇ νεχρημαίεσσι ἀνδρὶ ἀποκρίνῃ.

A person

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 133

His lord's command the faithful servant bears;

425 The seeming beggar answers with his pray'rs.

Blest be *Telemachus* ! in ev'ry deed

Inspire him *Jove* ! in ev'ry wish succeed !

This said, the portion from his son convey'd

With smiles receiving, on his scrip he lay'd.

430 Long as the minstrel swept the sounding wire,

He fed, and ceas'd when silence held the lyre.

Soon as the Suitors from the banquet rose,

Minerva prompts the Man of mighty woes

To

A person of great learning has observed that there is a tautology in the three last words; in *a beggar that wants*: as if the very notion of a beggar did not imply want. Indeed *Plato*, who cites this verse in his *Charmides*, uses another word instead of *ἄποιός*, and inserts *ἄπειρος*. *Hesiod* likewise, who makes use of the same line, instead of *ἄποιός* reads *ἄπειρος*, which would almost induce us to believe that they thought there was a tautology in *Homer*. It has therefore been conjectur'd, that the word *ἄποιός* should be inserted in the place of *ἄποιός*; I am sorry that the construction will not allow it; that word is of the masculine gender, and *ἄρα* which is of the feminine cannot agree with it. We may indeed substitute *ἄρα*, and then the sense will be *bashfulness is no good petitioner for a beggar*; but this must be done without authority. We must therefore thus understand *Homer*; "Too much modesty is not good for a poor man, who lives by begging, *ἄποιός*; and this solution clears the verse from the tautology, for a man may be in want, and not be a beggar; or (as *Homer* expresses it) *ἄπειρος*, and yet not *ἄποιός*."

v. 432. *Minerva prompts, &c.*] This is a circumstance that occurs almost in every book of the *Odyssey*, and *Pallas* has been thought to mean no more than the inherent wisdom of *Ulysses*, which guides all his actions upon all emergencies: It is not impossible but the Poet might intend to inculcate, that the wisdom of man is the gift of Heaven, and a blessing from the Gods,

134 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

To tempt their bounties with a suppliant's art,

435 And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart;

(Not

Gods. But then is it not a derogation to *Ulysses*, to think nothing but what the Goddess dictates? and a restraint of human liberty, to act solely by the impulse of a Deity? *Plutarch* in his life of *Coriolanus* excellently solves this difficulty. "Men (observes that Author) are ready to censure and despise the Poet, as if he destroy'd the use of reason, and the freedom of their choice, by continually ascribing every suggestion of heart to the influence of a Goddess: Whereas he introduces a Deity not to take away the liberty of the will, but as moving it so act with freedom; the Deity does not work in us the inclinations, but only offers the object to our minds, from whence we conceive the impulse, and form our resolutions." However these influences do not make the action involuntary, but only give a beginning to spontaneous operations; for we must either remove God from all manner of causality, or confess that he invisibly assists us by a secret co-operation. For it is absurd to imagine that the help he lends us, consists in fashioning the postures of the body, or directing the corporeal motions; but in influencing our souls, and exciting the inward faculties into action by secret impulses from above; or on the contrary, by raising an aversion in the soul, to restrain us from action. 'Tis true in ordinary affairs of life, in matters that are brought about by the ordinary way of reason, *Homer* ascribes the execution of them to human performance, and frequently represents his Heroes calling a council in their own breasts, and acting according to the dictates of reason: But in actions unaccountably daring, of a transcendent nature, these they are said to be carry'd away by a divine impulse or enthusiasm, and it is no longer human reason, but a God that influences the soul.

I have already observ'd, that *Homer* makes use of Machines sometimes merely for ornament; this place is an instance of it: Here is no action of an uncommon nature perform'd, and yet *Pallas* directs *Ulysses*: *Plutarch* very justly observes, that whenever the Heroes of *Homer* execute any prodigious exploit of valour, he continually introduces a Deity, who assists in the performance of it; but it is also true, that to shew the dependance of man upon the assistance of Heaven, he frequently ascribes the common dictates of wisdom to the Goddess of it. If we take the act here inspir'd by *Minerva*, as it lies nakedly in *Homer* it is

(Not but his soul, resentful as humane,
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train.)
With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintive sound,
Humble he moves, imploring all around.

is no more than a bare command to beg; an act, that needs not the wisdom of a Goddess to command: But we are to understand it as a direction to *Ulysses* how to behave before the Suitors upon his first appearance, how to carry on his disguise so artfully as to prevent all suspicions, and take his measures so effectually as to work his own re-establishment: In this light, the command becomes worthy of a Goddess: The act of begging is only the method by which he carries on his design; the consequence of it is the main point in view, namely, the Suitors destruction. The rest is only the stratagem, by which he obtains the victory.

Y. 435. *And learn the gen'rons from th' ignoble heart:*

(Not but his soul, resentful as humane,

Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train.)

A single virtue, or act of humanity, is not a sufficient atonement for a whole life of insolence and oppression; so that altho' some of the Suitors should be found less guilty than the rest, yet they are still too guilty to deserve impunity.

V. 348. *With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintive sound*

Humble he moves, &c.]

Homer inserts this particularity to shew the complying nature of *Ulysses* in all fortunes; he is every where *πολύτροπος*, it is his distinguishing character in the first verse of the *Odyssey*, and it is visible in every part of it. He is an artist in the trade of begging as *Eustathius* observes, and knows how to become the lowest, as well as the highest station.

Homer adds, that the Suitors were struck with wonder at the sight of *Ulysses*. This is (says *Eustathius*) because they had never before seen him in *Ithaca*, and concluded him to be a foreigner. But I rather think it is a compliment *Homer* pays to his *Hercules* to represent his port and figure to be such, as tho' a beggar, struck them with astonishment.

440 The proud feel pity, and relief bestow,
 With such an image touch'd of human woe;
 Enquiring all, their wonder they confess,
 And eye the man, majestic in distress.

While thus they gaze and question with their eyes,
 445 The bold *Melanthius* to their thought replies.
 My Lords! this stranger of gigantic port
 The good *Eumæus* usher'd to your court.
 Full well I mark'd the features of his face,
 Tho' all unknown his clime, or noble race.

450 And is this present, swincherd! of thy hand?
 Bring'st thou these vagrants to infest the land?
 (Returns *Antinous* with retorted eye)
 Objects uncouth! to check the genial joy.
 Enough of these our court already grace,

455 Of giant stomach, and of famish'd face.
 Such guests *Eumæus* to his country brings,
 To share our feast, and lead the life of Kings.

To whom the hospitable swain rejoind:
 Thy passion, Prince, belies thy knowing mind.

460 Who calls, from distant nations to his own,
 The poor, distinguish'd by their wants alone?

Round

Book XVII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 137

- Round the wide world are sought those men divine
Who publick structures raise, or who design ;
Those to whose eyes the Gods their ways reveal,
465 Or bless with salutary arts to heal ;
But chief to Poets such respect belongs,
By rival nations courted for their songs ;
These States invite, and mighty Kings admire,
Wide as the sun displays his vital fire.
470 It is not so with Want ! how few that feed
A wretch unhappy, meerly for his need ?
Unjust to me and all that serve the state,
To love *Ulysses* is to raise thy hate.
For me, suffice the approbation won
475 Of my great mistress, and her god-like son.
To him *Telemachus*. No more incense
The man by nature prone to insolence :
Injurious minds just answers but provoke——
Then turning to *Anisimos*, thus he spoke.

v. 462. *Round the wide world are sought those men divine, &c.*]
This is an evidence of the great honour antiently paid to persons eminent in mechanic arts : The Architect, and publick artisans, *δημιουργοί*, are joyn'd with the Prophet, Physician, and Poet, who were esteem'd almost with a religious veneration, and look'd upon as public blessings. Honour was antiently given to men in proportion to the benefits they brought to society : A useles great man is a burthen to the earth, while the meanest artisan is beneficial to his fellow-creatures, and useful in his generation.

Thanks

138 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

480 Thanks to thy care! whose absolute command
Thus drives the stranger from our court and land.
Heav'n bless its owner with a better mind!
From envy free, to charity inclin'd.
This both *Penelope* and I afford:

485 Then, Prince! be bounteous of *Ulysses'* board.
To give another's is thy hand so slow?
So much more sweet, to spoil, than to bestow?
Whence, great *Telemachus*! this lofty strain?

(*Antinous* cries with insolent disdain)

490 Portions like mine if ev'ry Sutor gave,
Our walls this twelvemonth should not see the slave;
He spoke, and lifting high above the board
His pond'rous footstool, shook it at his lord.
The rest with equal hand conferr'd the bread;
495 He fill'd his scrip, and to the threshold sped;
But first before *Antinous* stopt, and said.

Bestow, my friend! thou dost not seem the work
Of all the *Greeks*, but Prince-like and the first,

Then

v. 497. *Bestow, my friend! &c.*] *Ulysses* here acts with a prudent dissimulation; he pretends not to have understood the irony of *Antinous*, nor to have observ'd his preparation to strike him; and therefore proceeds as if he apprehended no danger. This at once shews the patience of *Ulysses* who is inur'd to sufferings, and gives a foundation for the punishment of *Antinous* in the conclusion of the *Odyssey*.

11

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 139

Then as in dignity, be first in worth,

500 And I shall praise thee thro' the boundless earth.

Once I enjoy'd in luxury of state

Whate'er gives man the envy'd name of Great;

Wealth, servants, friends, were mine in better days;

And hospitality was then my praise;

505 In every sorrowing soul I pour'd delight,

And poverty stood smiling in my fight.

But *Jove*, all-governing, whose only will

Determines Fate, and mingles good with ill,

Sent me (to punish my pursuit of gain)

510 With roving pyrates o'er th' *Egyptian* main:

By *Egypt's* silver flood our ships we moor;

Our spies commission'd strait the coast explore;

It is observable, that *Ulysses* gives his own History in the same words as in the fourteenth book, yet varies from it in the conclusion; he there spoke to *Eumæus*, and *Eumæus* is here present, and hears the story: How is it then that he does not observe the falsification of *Ulysses*, and conclude him to be an impostor? *Æsthius* labours for an answer; he imagines that *Eumæus* was inadvertent, or had forgot the former relation, and yet asserts that the reason why *Ulysses* tells the same History in part to *Antinous*, proceeds from a fear of detection in *Eumæus*. I would rather imagine that *Ulysses* makes the deviation, trusting to the judgment of *Eumæus*, who might conclude that there was some good reason why he forbears to let *Antinous* into the full History of his life; especially, because he was an enemy both to *Ulysses* and *Eumæus*: he might therefore easily reflect, that the difference of his story arose from prudence and design, rather than from imposture and falsehood.

But

140 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

But impotent of mind, with lawless will

The country ravage, and the natives kill.

§15 The spreading clamor to their city flies,

And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise:

The red'ning dawn reveals the hostile fields

Horrid with bristly spears, and gleaming shields:

Four thunder'd on their side: our guilty head

§20 We turn'd to flight; the gath'ring vengeance spread

On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead.

Some few the foes in servitude detain;

Death ill exchange'd for bondage and for pain!

Unhappy me a Cyprian took a-board,

§25 And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty Lord:

v. 525. *And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty Lord.*] We are not to search too exactly into historic truth among the fictions of Poetry; but it is very probable that this *Dmetor* was really King of *Cyprus*. *Enslathius* is of this opinion; but it may be objected, that *Cinyras* was King of *Cyprus* in the time of *Ulysses*. Thus *lib. XI. Iliad*.

The beaming Cuira's next adorn'd his breast:

The same which once King Cinyras possess;

The fame of Greece, and her assembled host,

Had reach'd that Monarch on the Cyprian coast.

The answer is, there were almost twenty years elapsed since the mention of this breast-plate of *Cinyras*; this King therefore being dead, *Dmetor* possess the *Cyprian* throne.

Hither;

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 141

Hither, to 'scape his chains, my course I steer,
Still curst by fortune, and insulted here!

To whom *Antinous* thus his rage express.

What God has plagu'd us with this gormaud guest?

530 Unless at distance, wretch! thou keep behind,

Another Isle than *Cyprus* more unkind,

Another *Ægypt*, shalt thou quickly find.

From all thou beg'st, a bold audacious slave;

Nor all can give so much as thou canst crave.

535 Nor wonder I, at such profusion shown;

Shameless they give, who give what's not their own,

The Chief, retiring. Souls, like that in thee,

Ill suit such forms of grace and dignity.

Nor will that hand to utmost need afford

540 The smallest portion of a wasteful board,

Whose luxury whole patrimonies sweeps,

Yet starving Want, amidst the riot, weeps.

The haughty Suitor with resentment burns,

And low'ly smiling, this reply returns.

v. 532. *Another Ægypt, &c.*] This passage is a full demonstration that the country was call'd *Ægypt* in the days of *Homer*, as well as the river *Nilus*; for in the speech he uses *Ἀγυπτιος* in the masculine gender to denote the river, and here he calls it *Ἀγυπτίον* in the feminine, to shew that he speaks of the country: The former word agreeing with *ποταμός*, the latter with *γῆα*.

Take

545 Take that, ere yet thou quit this princely throng:
And dumb for ever be thy stand'reous tongue!

He said, and high the whirling tripod flung.
His shoulder-blade receiv'd th' ungentle shock;
He stood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock;

550 But shook his thoughtful head, nor more complain'd,
Sedate of soul, his character sustain'd,
And inly form'd revenge: then back withdrew;
Before his feet the well-fill'd scrip he threw,
And thus with semblance mild address'd the crew.

555 May what I speak your princely minds approve,
Ye Peers and rivals in this noble love!
Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.
If, when the sword our country's quarrel draws,

Or

v. 557. *Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.*] The reasoning of *Ulysses* in the original is not without some obscurity: For how can it be affirm'd, that it is no great affliction to have our property invaded, and to be wounded in the defence of it? The beggar who suffers for asking an alms, has no injury done him, except the violence offer'd to his person; but it is a double injury, to suffer both in our persons and properties. We must therefore suppose that *Ulysses* means, that the importance of the cause, when our rights are invaded, is equal to the danger, and that we ought to suffer wounds, or even death, in defence of it; and that a brave man grieves not at such laudable adventures. Or perhaps *Ulysses* speaks only with respect to *Antinous*, and means that it is a greater injury to offer violence to the poor and the stranger, than to persons of greater fortunes and station.

East athenas

Or if defending what is justly dear,
 560 From *Mars* impartial some broad wound we bear;
 The gen'rous motive dignifies the scar.
 But for meer want, how hard to suffer wrong?
 Want brings enough of other ills along!
 Yet if injustice never be secure,
 565 If fiends revenge, and Gods assert the poor,
 Death shall lay low the proud aggressor's head,
 And make the dust *Antinous'* bridal bed.
 Peace wretch! and eat thy bread without offence,
 (The Suitor cry'd) or force shall drag thee hence,
 570 Scourge thro' the publick street, and cast thee there,
 A mangled carcase for the hounds to tear.
 His furious deed the gen'ral anger mov'd,
 All, ev'n the worst, condemn'd; and some reprov'd.
 Was ever Chief for wars like these renown'd?
 575 Ill fits the stranger and the poor to wound.

Eustathius gives a deeper meaning to the speech of *Ulysses*; he applies it to his present condition, and it is the same as if he had said openly, It would be no great matter if I had been wounded in defence of my Palace, and other properties, but to suffer only for asking an alms, this is a deep affliction. So that *Ulysses* speaks in general, but intends his own particular condition; and the import of the whole is, I grieve to suffer, not upon any weighty account, but only for being poor and hungry.

144 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

Unblest thy hand! if in this low disguise
Wander, perhaps, some inmate of the skies;
They (curious oft of mortal actions) deign
In forms like these, to round the earth and main;
580 Just and unjust recording in their mind,
And with sure eyes inspecting all mankind.

Telemachus absorpt in thought severe,
Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear;

But

v. 578. *They (curious oft of human actions) &c.*] We have already observ'd, that it was the opinion of the antients, that the Gods frequently assum'd an human shape. Thus *Ovid* of *Jupiter*.

————— *Summo delabor Olympo,
Et Deus humanâ lustris sub imagine terras.*

I refer the Reader to the objections of *Plato*, mention'd in the preceding book. It is observable, that *Homer* puts this remarkable truth into the mouth of the Suitors, to shew that it was certain and undeniable, when it is attested even by such persons as had no piety or religion.

v. 582. *Telemachus*—————

Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear.]

This is spoken with particular judgment; *Telemachus* is here to act the part of a wise man, not of a tender son; he restrains his tears lest they should betray his father, it being improbable that he should weep for a vagabond and beggar. We find he has profited by the instructions of *Ulysses*, and practises the injunctions given in the former book.

————— *If scorn insult my reverend age,
Bear it, my son; repress thy rising rage.
If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repell,
Bear it, my son, tho' thy brave heart rebell.*

Telemachus

But the dark brow of silent sorrow shook:

585 While thus his mother to her virgins spoke.

" On him and his may the bright God of day

" That base, inhospitable blow repay!

The nurse replies: " If *Jove* receives my pray'r,

" Not one survives to breath to-morrow's air.

590 All, all are foes, and mischief is their end;

Antinous most to gloomy death a friend;

(Replies the Queen) the stranger begg'd their grace,

And melting pity soften'd ev'ry face;

From ev'ry other hand redress he found,

595 But fell *Antinous* answer'd with a wound.

Amidst her maids thus spoke the prudent Queen,

Then bad *Eumæus* call the Pilgrim in.

Much of th' experienc'd man I long to hear,

If or his certain eye, or list'ning ear

600 Have learn'd the fortunes of my wand'ring Lord?

Thus she, and good *Eumæus* took the word.

A private audience if thy grace impart,

The stranger's words may ease the royal heart:

Telemachus struggles against the yearnings of nature, and shews himself to be a master of his passions; he must therefore be thought to exert an act of wisdom, not of insensibility.

146 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

His sacred eloquence in balm distils,

605 And the sooth'd heart with secret pleasure fills.

Three days have spent their beams, three nights have run

Their silent journey, since his tale begun,

Unfinish'd yet, and yet I thirst to hear!

As when some heav'n-taught Poet charms the ear,

610 (Suspending sorrow with celestial strain

Breath'd from the Gods to soften human pain)

Time steals away with unregarded wing,

And the soul hears him, tho' he cease to sing.

Ulysses late he saw, on *Cretan* ground,

615 (His father's guest) for *Minos*' birth renown'd.

He now but waits the wind, to waft him o'er

With boundless treasure, from *Thesprotia*'s shore.

v. 615. ———— [For *Minos*' birth renown'd.] *Dionysius Siculus* thus writes of *Minos*: "He was the son of *Jupiter* and *Europa*, who was fabled to be carried by a bull; (that is, in a ship called the bull, or that had the image of a bull carved upon its prow) into *Crete*: Here *Minos* reign'd; and built many Cities; he establish'd many laws among the *Cretans*; he also provided a navy, by which he subdued many of the adjacent Islands. The expression in the *Greek* will bear a two-fold sense; and implies either, where *Minos* was born, or where the descendants of *Minos* reign; for *Idomeneus*, who govern'd *Crete* in the days of *Ulysses*, was a descendant of *Minos*, from his son *Deucalion*.

Homer mentions it as an honour to *Crete*, to have given birth to so great a law-giver as *Minos*; and it is universally true, that every great man is an honour to his country: *Athens* did not give reputation to learn'd men, but learned men to *Athens*.

To

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 147

To this the Queen. The wand'rer let me hear,
 While yon luxurious race indulge their cheer,
 620 Devour the grazing ox and browzing goat,
 And turn my gen'rous vintage down their throat.
 For where's an arm, like thine *Ulysses* strong,
 To curb wild riot and to punish wrong?
 She spoke. *Telemachus* then sneez'd aloud;
 625 Constrain'd, his nostril eccho'd thro' the crowd.

The

v. 624. ——— *Telemachus then sneez'd aloud.* *Enstathius* fully explains the nature of this omen; for sneezing was reckon'd ominous both by the *Greeks* and *Romans*. While *Penelope* utter'd these words, *Telemachus* sneezes; *Penelope* accepts the omen, and expects the words to be verifi'd. The original of the veneration paid to sneezing is this: The head is the most sacred part of the body, the seat of thought and reason: now the sneeze coming from the head, the Antients look'd upon it as a sign or omen, and believ'd it to be sent by *Jupiter*; therefore they regard-ed it with a kind of adoration: The Reader will have a full idea of the nature of the omen of sneezing here mention'd, from a singular instance in *lib. 3. of Xenophon*, in his expedition of *Cyrus*, *Xenophon* having ended a short speech to his soldiers with these words, *viz.* "We have many reasons to hope for prefer-
 " vation;" they were scarce utter'd, when a certain soldier sneez'd: the whole army took the omen, and at once paid adoration to the Gods; then *Xenophon* resuming his discourse, proceeded, "Since, my fellow-soldiers, at the mention of our preservation, "*Jupiter* has sent this omen, &c. So that *Xenophon* fully explains *Homer*. Sneezing was likewise reckon'd ominous by the *Romans*. Thus *Catullus*,

*Hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante
 Dextram sternit adprobationem.*

Thus also *Propertius*,

148 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.

The smiling Queen the happy omen blest :

“ So may these impious fall, by fate oppress’d !

Then to *Eumæus* : Bring the stranger, fly !

And if my questions meet a true reply,

630 Grac’d with a decent robe he shall retire,

A gift in season which his wants require.

Thus spoke *Penelope*. *Eumæus* flies

In duteous haste, and to *Ulysses* cries.

The Queen invites thee, venerable guest !

635 A secret instinct moves her troubled breast

*Non tibi nascenti primis, mea vita, diebus
Aridus aventum sternuit omen amor.*

We find in all these instances that sneezing was constantly receiv’d as a good omen, or a sign of approbation from the Gods. In these ages we pay an idle superstition to sneezing, but it is ever look’d upon as a bad omen, and we cry *God bless you*, upon hearing it, as the *Greeks* in latter times said *ἔνδρι* or *Ζεὺ σάουρον*. We are told this custom arose from a mortal distemper that affected the head, and threw the patient into convulsive sneezings, that occasion’d his death.

I will only add from *Enstathius*, that *Homer* expresses the loudness of the sneezing, to give a reason why *Penelope* heard it, she being in an apartment at some distance from *Telemachus*.

The sneezing likewise gives us the reason why *Penelope* immediately commands *Eumæus* to introduce the beggar into her presence; the omen gave her hopes to hear of *Ulysses*, she saw the beggar was a stranger, and a traveller, and therefore expected he might be able to give her some information.

OF

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 149

Of her long-absent Lord from thee to gain
Some light, and sooth her soul's eternal pain.
If true, if faithful thou, her grateful mind
Of decent robes a present has design'd;

640 So finding favour in the royal eye,
Thy other wants her subjects shall supply.

Fair truth alone (the patient man reply'd)
My words shall dictate, and my lips shall guide:
To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,

645 In equal woes, alas! involv'd by heav'n.
Much of his fates I know; but check'd by fear
I stand: the hand of violence is here:
Here boundless wrongs the starry skies invade,
And injur'd suppliants seek in vain for aid.

650 Let for a space the pensive Queen attend,
Nor claim my story 'till the sun descend;
Then in such robes as suppliants may require,
Compos'd and chearful by the genial fire,

v. 644. *To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by heav'n.*]

These words bear a double sense, one applicable to the speaker, the other to the Reader: The Reader, who knows this beggar to be *Ulysses*, is pleas'd with the conceal'd meaning, and hears with pleasure the beggar affirming that he is fully instructed in the misfortunes of *Ulysses*: But speaking in the character of a beggar, he keeps *Æneas* in ignorance, who believes he is reciting the adventures of a friend, while he really gives his own History.

150 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVII.*

When loud uproar and lawless riot cease,

655 Shall her pleas'd ear receive my words in peace.

Swift to the Queen returns the gentle swain:

And, say (she cries) does fear, or shame, detain

The cautious stranger? With the begging kind

Shame suits but ill. *Eumæus* thus rejoin'd:

660 He only asks a more propitious hour,

And shuns (who wou'd not?) wicked men in power;

At ev'ning mild (meet season to confer)

By turns to question, and by turns to hear.

Whoe'er this guest (the prudent Queen replies)

665 His ev'ry step and ev'ry thought is wise.

For men like these on earth he shall not find,

In all the miscreant race of humankind.

Thus she. *Eumæus* all her words attends,

And parting, to the Suitor pow'rs descends:

670 There seeks *Telemachus*, and thus apart

In whispers breaths the fondness of his heart.

The time, my Lord, invites me to repair

Hence to the lodge; my charge demands my care.

These sons of murder thirst thy life to take;

675 O guard it, guard it, for thy servant's sake!

Thanks

Book XVII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 151

Thanks to my friend, he cries; but now the hour
Of night draws on, go seek the rural bow'r:

But first refresh: and at the dawn of day

Hither a victim to the Gods convey.

680 Our life to heav'n's immortal pow'rs we trust,

Safe in their care, for heav'n protects the just.

Observant of his voice, *Eumæus* fate

And fed recumbent on a chair of state.

Then instant rose, and as he mov'd along

685 'Twas riot all amid the Sutor-throng,

They feast, they dance, and raise the mirthful song.

'Till now declining tow'rd the close of day,

The sun obliquely shot his dewy ray.

v. 676. ———— *but now the hour Of night draws on* ————]

The Reader may look back to the beginning of the preceding book, for the explication of *Δείλον ἡμᾶς*, here mention'd by *Homer*.

This book does not fully comprehend the space of one day: It begins with the morning, and ends before night, so that the time here mention'd by the Poet, is the evening of the thirty ninth day.





*Ulysses fights wth Irus the Beggar & beats him, &
The Suitors divert themselves wth Dancing & Music*

P. Fourdrinier. Scul.



THE
EIGHTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.



G 5

The



THE ARGUMENT.

The Fight of Ulysses and Irus.

The Beggar Irus insults Ulysses; the Suitors promote the Quarrel, in which Irus is worsted, and miserably handled. Penelope descends, and receives the Presents of the Suitors. The Dialogue of Ulysses with Eurymachus.

THE

THE
EIGHTEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

WHILE fix'd in thought the pensive Heroe sate,
A Mendicant approach'd the royal gate;
A surly vagrant of the giant kind,
The stain of manhood, of a coward mind:

From

NOTES.

Homer has been severely blam'd for describing *Ulysses*, a King, entering the lists with a beggar: *Rapin* affirms, that he demeans himself by engaging with an unequal adversary. The objection would be unanswerable, if *Ulysses* appear'd in his royal character: But it is as necessary in Epic Poetry as on the Theatre, to adapt the behaviour of every person to the character he is to represent, whether real or imaginary. Would it not have been ridiculous to have represented him, while he was disguis'd in the garb of a beggar, refusing the combat, because he knew himself to be a King? and would not such a conduct have endanger'd a discovery? Ought we not rather

156 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

5 From feast to feast, insatiate to devour

He flew, attendant on the genial hour;

When on his mother's knees a babe he lay,

She nam'd *Arnaus* on his natal day,

ther to look upon this Episode as an instance of the greatness of the calamities of *Ulysses*, who is reduced to such uncommon extremities as to be set upon a level with the meanest of wretches?

v. 8. *She nam'd Arnaus*———] It seems probable from this passage, that the mother gave the name to the child in the days of *Homer*; tho' perhaps not without the concurrence of the father: Thus in the scriptures it is said of *Leah*, that *she bare a son and called his name Reuben*; and again, *she called his name Simeon*; and the same is frequently repeated both of *Leah* and *Rachael*. In the age of *Aristophanes*, the giving a name to the child seems to have been a divided prerogative between the father and mother: For in his *Nephelai* there is dispute between *Strepsiades* and his wife, concerning the name of their son: The wife was of noble birth, and would therefore give him a noble name; the husband was a plain villager, and was rather for a name that denoted frugality: but the woman not waving the least branch of her prerogative, they compromis'd the affair, by giving the child a compounded name that imply'd both frugality and chivalry, derived from *φιδω* to spare, and *ἵππος* an horse; and the young Cavalier's name was *Phidippides*. *Eustathius* affirms, that antiently the mother nam'd the child; and the Scholiast upon *Aristophanes* in *avib.* quotes a fragment from *Euripides* to this purpose, from a Play call'd *Ægeus*.

Τὶ δὲ μᾶτις ἐν δεκάτῃ τίκον ἀνόμεον.

What was the name given on the tenth day by the mother to the child? *Dacier* tells us, that the name of *Arnaus* was prophetic ἐπὶ τῶν ἀγνῶν, from the sheep the glutton would devour when he came to manhood; but this is mere fancy, and it is no reason because he proved a glutton, that therefore the name foretold it: One might rather think the fondness of the mother toward her infant, suggested a very different view: She gave the name according to her wishes, and flatter'd her self that he would prove a very rich man, a man of many flocks and herds; and therefore she call'd him *Ἀρνῆος*; and this is the more probable, because all riches originally consisted in flocks and herds.

But

But *Irus* his associates call'd the Boy,
10 Practis'd, the common messenger to fly;
Irus, a name expressive of th' employ.

}

From his own roof with meditated blows
He strove to drive the Man of mighty woes.

Hence dotard, hence! and timely speed thy way,
15 Left dragg'd in vengeance, thou repent thy stay;
See how with nods assent yon princely train!
But honouring age, in mercy I refrain;
In peace away! lest if persuasions fail,
This arm with blows more eloquent prevail.

20 To whom with stern regards: O insolence,
Indecently to rail without offence!

What bounty gives, without a rival share,
I ask, what harms not thee, to breathe this air:
Alike on alms we both precarious live:

25 And canst thou envy, when the great relieve?
Know from the bounteous heav'ns all riches flow,
And what man gives, the Gods by man bestow;
Proud as thou art, henceforth no more be proud,
Lest I imprint my vengeance in thy blood;

v. 11. *Irus*, a name expressive of th' employ.] To understand this, we must have recourse to the derivation of the word *Irus*; it comes from *ἵρως*, which signifies *nuntio*; *Irus* was therefore so call'd, because he was a public messenger; and *Iris* bears that name, as the messenger of the Gods; *Ἴρις, ἀπαγγέλλων*; *Ἴρις, Ἀγγελος*. *Hesychius*.

Old

158 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

30 Old as I am, should once my fary burn,
How wouldst thou fly, nor ev'n in thought return?
Mere woman-glutton! (thus the churl reply'd)
A tongue so flippant, with a throat so wide!
Why cease I, Gods! to dash those teeth away,
35 Like some vile swine's, that greedy of his prey
Uproots the bearded corn? rise, try the fight,
Gird well the loins, approach, and feel my might:

v. 34. ———— *To dash those teeth away
Like some vile Boar's.*]

These words refer to a custom that prevailed in former ages; it was allow'd to strike out the teeth of any beast which the owner found in his grounds: *Enstathius* informs us, that this was a custom or law among the people of *Cyprus*; but from what *Homer* here speaks, it seems to have been a general practice; at least it was in use amongst the *Ithacans*.

v. 47. *Gird well thy loins.*] We may gather from hence the manner of the single combat; the champions fought naked, and only made use of a cincture round the loins out of decency. *Homer* directly affirms it, when *Ulysses* prepares for the fight.

*Then girding his strong loins, the King prepares
To close in combat, and his body bares;
Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs
By just degrees like well-turn'd columns rise;
Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,
And each strong joint Minerva knits more strong.*

Thus *Diomed* in the *Iliad* girds his friend *Euryalus* when he engages *Epeus*.

Officious with the cincture girds him round.

The speeches here are short, and the periods remarkably concise, suitable to the nature of anger. The Reader may consult the Annotations on the 20th book, concerning the Goat's entrails mention'd by *Antinous*.

Sure

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 159

Sure of defeat, before the Peers engage ;
Unequal fight ! when youth contends with age !

40 Thus in a wordy war their tongues display
More fierce intents, preluding to the fray ;
Antinous hears, and in a jovial vein,
Thus with loud laughter to the Suitor-train:

This happy day in mirth, my friends employ,
45 And lo ! the Gods conspire to crown our joy.
See ready for the fight, and hand to hand,
Yon surly mendicants contentious stand ;
Why urge we not to blows ? Well-pleas'd they spring
Swift from their seats, and thick'ning form a ring.

50 To whom *Antinous*. Lo ! enrich'd with blood
A kid's well-fatted entrails (rasteful food !)
On glowing embers lie ; on him bestow
The choicest portion who subdues his foe ;
Grant him unrival'd in these walls to stay,
55 The sole attendant on the genial day.

The Lords applaud : *Ulysses* then with art,
And fears well-feign'd, disguis'd his dauntless heart:

Worn as I am with age, decay'd with woe,

Say is it baseness, to decline the foe ?

60 Hard conflict ! when calamity and age

With vigorous youth, unknown to cares, engage !

Yet

160 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

Yet fearful of disgrace, to try the day

Imperious hunger bids, and I obey;

But swear, impartial arbiters of right,

65 Swear, to stand neutral while we cope in fight.

The Peers assent: when strait his sacred head
Telemachus uprais'd, and sternly said.

Stranger, if prompted to chastise the wrong
Of this bold insolent, confide, be strong!

70 Th' injurious Greek that dares attempt a blow,

That instant makes *Telemachus* his foe;

And these my * friends shall guard the sacred ties
Of hospitality, for they are wise.

v. 64. *But swear, impartial arbiters of right,
Swear to stand neutral while we cope in fight.*]

This is a very necessary precaution: *Ulysses* had reason to apprehend that the Suitors would interest themselves in the cause of *Irus*, who was their daily attendant, rather than in that of a perfect stranger. *Homer* takes care to point out the prudence of *Ulysses* upon every emergence: Besides, he raises this fray between two beggars into some dignity, by requiring the sanction of an oath to regulate the laws of the combat. It is the same solemnity used in the *Iliad* between *Paris* and *Menelaus*, and represents these combatants engaging with the formality of two Heroes.

v. 72. *And these my friends shall guard the sacred ties
Of hospitality, for they are wise.*]

When *Telemachus* speaks these words, he is to be supposed to turn to *Eurymachus* and *Antinous*, to whom he directs his discourse. It must be allow'd that this is an artful piece of flattery in *Telemachus*, and he makes use of it to engage these two Princes, who were the chief of the Suitors, on his side.

* *Antinous* and *Eurymachus*.

Then

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 161

Then girding his strong loins, the King prepares
To close in combat, and his body bares;
Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs
By just degrees like well-turn'd columns rise :
Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,
And each strong joint *Minerva* knits more strong,
O (Attendant on her chief:) the Sutor-crowd
With wonder gaze, and gazing speak aloud;
Irus, alas! shall *Irus* be no more,
Black fate impends, and this th'avenging hour!
Gods! how his nerves a matchless strength proclaim:
Swell o'er his well-strung limbs, and brace his frame!

Then pale with fears, and sick'ning at the sight,
They dragg'd the unwilling *Irus* to the fight;
From his blank visage fled the coward blood,
And his flesh trembled as aghast he stood:

v. 82. *Irus, alas! shall Irus be no more.*] This is literally translated: I confess I with *Homer* had omitted these little collusions of words: he sports with *Ἰρος ἄϊρος*. It is a low conceit, alluding to the derivation of *Irus*, and means that he shall never more be a messenger. The translation, tho' it be verbal, yet is free from ambiguity, and the joke conceal'd in *ἄϊρος*: this will be evident if we substitute another name in the place of *Irus*; we may say *Achilles* shall be no longer *Achilles*, without descending from the gravity of Epic Poetry.

O that

90 O that such baseness should disgrace the light!

O hide it, death, in everlasting night!

(Exclaims *Antinous*) can a vigorous foe

Meanly decline to combat age and woe?

But hear me, wretch! if recreant in the fray,

95 That huge bulk yield this ill-contested day,

Instant thou sail'st, to *Echetus* resign'd,

A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant kind,

Who

v. 90. O! that such baseness should disgrace the light,
Oh! hide it, death, &c.]

Eustathius gives us an instance of the deep penetration of some Critics, in their comments upon these words; they have found in them the Philosophy of *Pythagoras*, and the transmigration of Souls. The verse stands thus in *Homer*.

Νῦν μὲν μὴτ' εἴνε βυζάν, μὴτ' ἔτι σῶο,

which they imagine is to be understood after this manner; *I wish thou hadst never been born! and mayst thou never exist again, or have a second being!* To recite such an absurdity, it is to refute it. The verse when literally render'd bears this import; *I wish thou wert now dead, or hadst never been born!* an imprecation very natural to persons in anger, who seldom give themselves time to speak with profound allusions to Philosophy.

v. 96. Instant thou sail'st, to *Echetus* resign'd,
A tyrant fiercest of the tyrant kind.]

The tradition concerning *Echetus* stands thus: he was King of *Epirus*, the son of *Encheus* and *Phlogæa*; he had a daughter call'd *Metopè*, or as others affirm *Amphissa*; she being corrupted by *Echmodicus*, *Echetus* put out her eyes, and condemned her to grind pieces of iron made in the resemblance of corn; and told her she should recover her sight when she had ground the iron into flour. He invited *Echmodicus* to an entertainment, and cut off the extremities from all parts of his body, and cast them to the dogs;

as

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 163

Who casts thy mangled ears and nose a prey
To hungry dogs, and lops the man away.

100 While with indignant scorn he sternly spoke,
In ev'ry joint the trembling *Irus* shook;
Now front to front each frowning champion stands,
And poises high in air his adverse hands.
The Chief yet doubts, or to the shades below

105 To fell the Giant at one vengeful blow,
Or save his life; and soon his life to save
The King resolves, for mercy sways the brave.
That instant *Irus* his huge arm extends,
Full on the shoulder the rude weight descends:

110 The sage *Ulysses*, fearful to disclose
The Heroe latent in the man of wots,
Check'd half his might: yet rising to the stroke,
His jaw-bone dash'd; the crashing jaw-bone broke:

at length being seiz'd with madness, he fed upon his own flesh,
and dy'd. This History is confirm'd, *lib. 4. of Apollonius*,

Ἰρως ἔχεται γλῆνας ἐν χάλκεα κέντρα
Πῶς θυγατρὸς ὄντος συνάντη δὲ κάρφεται ὑπὸ
Ὀρφάνῃ ἐνι χαλκὸν αἰετρεύουσα καλῇ.

I wonder how this last quotation escap'd the diligence of *Enstathius*. *Dacier* affirms, that no mention is made of *Echecus* by any of the *Greek* Historians, and therefore she has recourse to another tradition, preserv'd by *Enstathius*, who tells us, that *Echecus* was contemporary with *Homer*, that the Poet had been ill us'd by him, and therefore took this revenge for his inhumanity.

Down

164 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.*

Down drop'd he stupid from the stunning wound,

115 His feet extended, quivering beat the ground,
His mouth and nostrils spout a purple flood,
His teeth all shatter'd rust immix'd with blood.

The Peers transported, as outstretch'd he lies,
With bursts of laughter rend the vaulted skies:

120 Then dragg'd along, all bleeding from the wound,
His length of carcass trailing prints the ground;
Rais'd on his feet, again he reels, he falls,
'Till propp'd reclining on the palace walls;
Then to his hand a staff the victor gave,

125 And thus with just reproach address'd the slave:
There terrible, affright the dogs, and reign.
A dreaded tyrant o'er the bestial train!

But mercy to the poor and stranger show;
Left heav'n in vengeance send some mightier woe.

130 Scornful he spoke, and o'er his shoulder flung
The broad-patch'd scrip; the scrip in tatters hung
Ill joyn'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.

Then turning short, disdain'd a further stay,
But to the palace measur'd back the way.

135 There as he rested, gathering in a ring
The Peers with smiles address their unknown King:

Stranger

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 165

Stranger may *Jove* and all th' aerial pow'rs,

With ev'ry blessing crown thy happy hours!

Our freedom to thy prowess'd arm we owe

140 From bold intrusion of thy coward foe;

Instant the flying sail the slave shall wing

To *Echetus*, the monster of a King.

While pleas'd he hears, *Antinous* bears the food,

A kid's well fatt'd entrails, rich with blood:

145 The bread from canisters of shining mold

Amphinomus! and wines that laugh in gold,

And oh! (he mildly cries) may heaven display

A beam of glory o'er thy future day!

Alas the brave too oft is doom'd to bear

150 The gripes of poverty, and stings of care.

To whom with thought mature the King replies:

The tongue speaks wisely, when the soul is wise;

Such was thy father! in imperial state,

Great without vice, that oft attends the great:

v. 140. From bold intrusion of thy coward foe.] The word in the Greek is ἀναλτορ. γαστέρα ἀναλτορ is a voracious appetite, a stomach that nothing can satisfy: Hesychius thus explains it: ἀναλτορ ἀναυξες, τὸτ' ἐστὶν ἰκανόν, ἢ ἀπλήρωτον παρὰ τὴν ἄλσιν. But there is undoubtedly an error in Hesychius; instead of ἰκανόν we should read ἰσχυρόν, that is, meager, or a stomach that appears always unfill'd. The general moral that we are to gather from the behaviour of *Ulysses* and *Irus*, is that insolence and boasting are signs of cowardice.

Nor

166 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

- 155 Nor from the fire art thou the son declin'd;
 Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind!
 Of all that breathes or groveling creeps on earth,
 Most vain is Man! calamitous by birth.
 To-day with pow'r elate, in strength he blooms;
 160 The haughty creature on that pow'r presumes:
 Anon from heav'n a sad reverse he feels;
 Untaught to bear, 'gainst heav'n the wretch rebels.

v. 165. *Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind.* There never was a finer lecture of Morality read in any of the schools of the Philosophers, than this which *Ulysses* delivers to *Amphinomus*; he ushers it in with great solemnity, and speaks to all mankind in the person of *Amphinomus*. It is quoted by a variety of Authors; *Pliny* in his Preface to his natural History, lib. 7. has wrote a dissertation on this sentence.

*Of all that breathes or grov'ling creeps on earth
 Most vain is Man, &c.*

Aristotle and *Maximus Tyrius* quote it; and *Plutarch* twice refers to it. *Homer* considers Man both with respect to the errors of the mind, and the calamities incident to the body; and upon a review of all mortal creatures, he attributes to man the unhappy superiority in miseries. But indeed *Homer* is so plain that he needs no interpretation, and any words but his own must disgrace him. Besides, this speech is beautiful in another view, and excellently sets forth the forgiving temper of *Ulysses*: He saw that all the sparks of virtue and humanity were not extinguished in *Amphinomus*; he therefore warns him with great solemnity to forsake the Suitors; he imprints conviction upon his mind, tho' ineffeſually, and shews by it that when he falls by the hand of *Ulysses* in the succeeding parts of the *Odyssey*, his death is not a revenge but a punishment.

For

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 107

For man is changeful as his bliss or woe,
Too high when prosp'rous, when distress too low.

165 There was a day, when with the scornful Great
I swell'd in pomp, and arrogance of state;
Proud of the pow'r that to high birth belongs;
And us'd that pow'r to justify my wrongs.
Then let not man be proud: but firm of mind,
170 Bear the best humbly, and the worst resign'd;

v. 163. *For man is changeful as his bliss or woe.*] Most of the interpreters have greatly misrepresented these words,

Τοῖς γὰρ νῶς ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων
Ὅλον ἐν ἡμᾶρ ἀγνοῖ.

They thus translate it, *talis mens hominum, qualem deus suggerit*; or, "Such is the mind of man, as Heav'n inspires:" but this is an error, for *όλον* cannot refer to *νῶς*, but to *ἡμᾶρ*, and the sentence is thus to be render'd, *Talis mens hominum, qualem diem deus inducit*; that is, "The mind of man changes with the complexion of the day, as heaven sends happiness or misery;" or as in the translation,

*For man is changeful as his bliss or woe,
Too high when prosp'rous, when distress'd too low.*

The Reader will be convinc'd that the construction requires this sense, by joyning the preposition with the verb, *ἐν* with *ἀγνοῖ*, and rendring it, *όλον ἡμᾶρ ἐν ἀγνοῖ*; nothing being more frequent than such a division of the preposition from the verb amongst the Greeks. It must be allow'd, that *Homer* gives a very unhappy, yet too just a picture, of human nature: Man is too apt to be proud and insolent in prosperity, and mean and abject in adversity; and those men who are most overbearing in an happy state, are always most base and mean in the day of affliction.

168 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

Be dumb when heav'n afflicts ! unlike yon train
Of haughty spoilers, insolently vain;
Who make their Queen and all her wealth a prey :
But Vengeance and *Ulysses* wing their way.

175 O may'st thou, favour'd by some guardian pow'r,
Far, far be distant in that deathful hour?
For sure I am, if stern *Ulysses* breathe,
These lawless riots end in blood and death.

Then to the Gods the rosy juice he pours,
180 And the drain'd goblet to the Chief restores.
Stung to the soul, o'ercast with holy dread,
He shook the graceful honours of his head;
His boding mind the future woe forestalls,
In vain ! by great *Telemachus* he falls,
185 For *Pallas* seals his doom : All sad he turns
To joyn the Peers, resumes his throne, and mourns.
Mean-while *Minerva* with instinctive fires
Thy soul, *Penelope*, from heav'n inspires;
With flatt'ring hopes the Suitors to betray,
190 And seem to meet, yet fly, the bridal day,

Thy

v. 189. *With flattering hopes the Suitors to betray*] The Greek is very concise, and the expression uncommon, *ὥς περὶ δόξῃ* *ὡς περὶ δόξῃ*; that is, *Penelope* thus acted that she might dilate the heart of the Suitors; meaning (as *Engelstins* observes) that she might give them false hopes by appearing in their company; for the

Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise,
And crown the mother and the wife with praise.

Then,

the heart shrinks and is contracted by sorrow and despair, and is again dilated by hope or joy: This is I believe literally true, the spirits flow briskly when we are in joy, and a new pulse is given to the blood, which necessarily must dilate the heart: On the contrary, when we are in sorrow the spirits are languid, and the blood moves less actively; and therefore the heart shrinks and contracts, the blood wanting vigour to dilate and expand it.

v. 191. *Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's, to raise.*] This is solely the act of *Minerva*, for *Penelope* is ignorant that she is to appear before her husband. This interview is excellently managed by *Homer*: *Ulysses* is to be convinced of his wife's fidelity; to bring this about, he introduces her upon the public stage, where her husband stands as a common unconcerned spectator, and hears her express her love for him in the warmest terms: here is no room for art or design, because she is ignorant that she speaks before *Ulysses*; and therefore her words must be suppos'd to proceed from the heart. This gives us a reason why *Homer* makes her dwell at large upon her passion for *Ulysses*, and paint it in the strongest colours, *viz.* to evidence her chastity, and urge *Ulysses* to hasten the destruction of the Suitors, by convincing him that she is able no longer to delude the marriage hour. But then it may be objected, if *Penelope's* sole design was to give a false hope to the Suitors, does she not take a very wrong method, by speaking so very tenderly of *Ulysses*? is not this a more probable reason for despair, than hope? It is true, it would have been so, if in the conclusion of her speech she had not artfully added,

*But when my son grows man, the royal sway
Resign, and happy be thy bridal day!*

So that *Telemachus* being now grown up to maturity, the Suitors concluded that the nuptial hour was at hand. If then we consider the whole conduct of *Penelope* in this book, it must be allow'd to be very refin'd and artful; she observes a due regard towards *Ulysses*, by shewing she is not to be persuaded to marry; and yet, by the same words she gives the Suitors hopes that the day is almost come when she intends to celebrate her nuptials; she manages so dextrously, as to persuade without a promise; and for this

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reason

170 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,

Thus with a transient smile the matron cries.

195 *Eurynomè!* to go where riot reigns

I feel an impulse, tho' my soul disdains ;

To my lov'd son the snares of death to show,

And in the traytor friend unmask the foe;

Who smooth of tongue, in purpose insincere,

200 Hides fraud in smiles, while death is ambush'd there.

Go warn thy son, nor be the warning vain,

(Reply'd the sagest of the royal train)

But bath'd, anointed, and adorn'd descend;

Pow'rful of charms, bid ev'ry grace attend;

205 The tyde of flowing tears a-while suppress;

Tears but indulge the sorrow, not repress.

Some joy remains: To thee a son is giv'n,

Such as in fondness parents ask of heav'n.

Ab

reason the words are put into the mouth of *Ulysses*, and it is *Ulysses* who gives the hopes, rather than *Penelope*.

v. 193. *Then, while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,*

Thus with a transient smile the matron cries.

Homer gives us a very beautiful and just image in these words. In the *Iliad* he used a similar expression concerning *Andromache*, *δαρπύειν γελᾶσασα*; a smile chastis'd with tears. *Ἀχρεῖον δ' ἐγέλασσαν* here bears the same import.

v. 207.

—————To thee a son is giv'n

Such as in fondness parents ask of heav'n.

I am not certain that this is the exact sense of *Homer*; *Dacier* understands

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 171.

Ah me! forbear, returns the Queen, forbear;

210 Oh! talk not, talk not of vain beauty's care!

No more I bathe, since he no longer sees

Those charms, for whom alone I wish'd to please.

The day that bore *Ulysses* from this coast,

Blasted the little bloom these cheeks could boast.

215 But instant bid *Autonoe* descend,

Instant *Hippodamè* our steps attend;

Ill suits it, female virtue to be seen

Alone indecent, in the walks of men.

Then while *Eurynome* the mandate bears,

220 From heav'n *Minerva* shoots with guardian cares;

derstands him very differently. *Eurynome* (observes that Author) is not endeavouring to comfort *Penelope* because her son is now come to years of maturity; her purpose is, to shew the necessity she has to have recourse to art, to assist her beauty: For (adds she) your son is grown a man; meaning that a Lady who has a son twenty years old, must have lost her natural beauty, and has occasion to be obliged to art to give her an artificial one. This I confess is too true, but it seems a little too ludicrous for Epic Poetry; I have follow'd a different sense, that gives us a far nobler image; conformable to that verse of *Horace*.

*Quid voveat dulci nutricula majus alumno,
Quam sapere, &c.*

This agrees with the tenour of *Enryclea's* Speech, and is a foundation of great comfort to *Penelope*.

172 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

O'er all her senses, as the couch she prest,
 She pours a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest,
 With ev'ry beauty ev'ry feature arms,
 Bids her cheeks glow, and lights up all her charms,
 225 In her love-darting eyes awakes the fires,
 (Immortal gifts! to kindle soft Desires)
 From limb to limb an air majestick sheds,
 And the pure ivory o'er her bosom spreads,
 Such *Venus* shines, when with a measur'd bound
 230 She smoothly gliding swims th' harmonious round,
 When with the graces in the dance she moves,
 And fires the gazing Gods with ardent loves.
 Then to the skies her flight *Minerva* bends,
 And to the Queen the damsel train descends:

Wak'd

¶ v. 221. O'er all her senses, as the couch she prest,
 She pours a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.]

This is an admirable stroke of art, to shew the determin'd resolution of *Penelope*, to forbear the endeavour of making her person agreeable in any eyes but those of *Ulysses*: A Goddess is obliged to cast her into an involuntary repose, and to supply an adventitious grace while she sleeps.

v. 233. Then to the skies her flight *Minerva* bends.] We see *Penelope* is a woman of so much wisdom, as to be the favourite of *Minerva*. She acts in every point with the highest discretion, and is inconsolable for her husband; yet the Poet forbears to let her into the secret that *Ulysses* is return'd: This is undoubtedly an intended satyr, and *Homer* means, that a woman in every point discreet, is still to be suspected of loquacity: This seems to have been

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 173

235 Wak'd at their steps, her flowing eyes uncloſe;
The tear ſhe wipes, and thus renews her woes.

Howe'er 'tis well! that Sleep a-while can free
With ſoft forgetfulneſs, a wretch like me;

Oh! were it giv'n to yield this tranſient breath,

240 Send, oh! *Diana*, ſend the ſleep of death!

Why muſt I waſte a tedious life in tears,

Nor bury in the ſilent grave my cares?

O my *Ulyſſes*! ever honour'd name!

For thee I mourn till death diſſolves my frame!

245 Thus wailing, ſlow and ſadly ſhe deſcends,

On either hand a damſel train attends:

Full where the dome its ſhining valves expands,

Radiant before the gazing Peers ſhe ſtands;

A vail tranſlucent o'er her brow diſplay'd,

250 Her beauty ſeems, and only ſeems, to ſhade:

Sudden ſhe lightens in their dazled eyes,

And ſudden flames in ev'ry boſom riſe;

been the real ſentiment of *Homer*, which he more fully declares
in the eleventh *Odyssey*.

*When earneſt to explore thy ſecret breaſt,
Unfold ſome trifle, but conceal the reſt;
For ſince of womankind ſo few are juſt,
Think all are falſe, nor ev'n the faithful craft.*

174 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY*. Book XVIII.

They send their eager souls with ev'ry look,

'Till silence thus th' imperial matron broke;

255 O why! my son, why now no more appears
That warmth of soul that urg'd thy younger years?
Thy riper days no growing worth impart,
A man in stature, still a boy in heart!
Thy well-knit frame unprofitably strong,

260 Speaks thee an Heroe from an Heroe sprung:
But the just Gods in vain those gifts bestow,
O wife alone in form, and brave in show!
Heav'ns! could a stranger feel oppression's hand
Beneath thy roof, and could'st thou tamely stand?

265 If thou the stranger's righteous cause decline,
His is the suff'rance, but the shame is thine.

To whom with filial awe, the Prince returns:

That gen'rous soul with just resentment burns,

Yet taught by time, my heart has learn'd to glow

270 For others good, and melt at others woe:

But impotent these riots to repel,

I bear their outrage, tho' my soul rebel:

Helpless amid the snares of death I tread,

And numbers leagu'd in impious union dread:

But

- 275 But now no crime is theirs: this wrong proceeds
 From *Irus*, and the guilty *Irus* bleeds. ,
 O would to *Jove*! or her whose arms display
 The shield of *Jove*, or him who rules the day!
 That yon proud Suitors, who licentious tread
- 280 These courts, within these courts like *Irus* blèd:
 Whose loose head tottering as with wine oppress'd,
 Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast;
 Pow'rless to move, his stagg'ring feet deny
 The coward wretch the privilege to fly.
- 285 Then to the Queen *Euymachus* replies:
 O justly lov'd, and not more fair than wise!
 Should *Greece* thro' all her hundred states survey
 Thy finish'd charms, all *Greece* would own thy sway,

In

v. 275. ————this wrong proceeds

From *Irus*, and the guilty *Irus* bleeds.]

Eustathius informs us, that we are here to understand the fray between *Irus* and *Ulysses*. *Penelope* refers to the violence intended to be offer'd to *Ulysses*, when the footstool was thrown at him by *Antinous*; we find that she was acquainted with that assault from her speech in the preceding book. In reality, the Queen was ignorant of the combat between *Irus* and *Ulysses*; but *Telemachus* misunderstands her with design, and makes an Apology for the Suitors, fearing to raise a further disorder, or provoke them to some more violent act of resentment.

v. 288. ————All *Greece* would own thy sway, &c.] *Homer* expresses *Greece* by *Ἰαῶν Ἀργος*, *Iasian Argos*. The word properly (as *Eustathius* observes) denotes the *Morea* or *Peloponnesus*, so call'd from *Iafus* the son of *Argus*, and so King of that Country;

H 4

uy;

176 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

In rival crouds contest the glorious prize,

290 Dispeopling realms to gaze upon thy eyes:

O woman! loveliest of the lovely kind,

In body perfect, and compleat in mind!

Ah me! returns the Queen, when from this shore
Ulysses sail'd, then beauty was no more!

295 The Gods decreed these eyes no more should keep

Their wonted grace, but only serve to weep.

Should he return, whate'er my beauties prove,

My virtues last; my brightest charm is love.

Now, Grief, thou all art mine! the Gods o'ercast

300 My soul with woes, that long, ah long must last!

try; Strabo agrees with Enslathius. Chapman wonderfully mistakes Homer, and explains his own mistake in a paraphrase of six lines.

*Most wise Icarus' daughter, if all those
That did for Colchos vent'rous sail dispose,
For that rich purchase; had before but seen
Earth's richer prize, in th' Ithacensian Queen,
They had not made that voyage; but to you
Would all their virtues, all their beings vow.*

I need not say how foreign this is to the original. In reality Argos with different epithets, signifies different countries; Ἀργεῖον Ἀργος means Thessaly, and Ἰαπων Ἀργος Peloponnesus; but here it denotes Greece universally; for it would appear absurd to tell Penelope, that all the *Morea* would admire her beauty, this would lessen the compliment; nor is any reason to be assigned why Peloponnesus should admire her more than the rest of the Greeks.

Too

Too faithfully my heart retains the day
 That sadly tore my royal Lord away :
 He grasp'd my hand, and oh my spouse ! I leave
 Thy arms, (he cry'd) perhaps to find a Grave :
 305 Fame speaks the *Trojans* bold ; they boast the skill
 To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,
 To dart the spear, and guide the rushing car
 With dreadful inroad thro' the walks of war,
 My sentence is gone forth, and 'tis decreed
 310 Perhaps by righteous heav'n that I must bleed !
 My father, mother, all, I trust to thee ;
 To them, to them transfer the love of me :
 But when my son grows man, the royal sway
 Resign, and happy be thy bridal day !

Such

v. 313. *But when my son grows man, the royal sway
 Resign, and happy be thy bridal day.*]

The original says, *resign the Palace to Telemachus* : this is spoken according to the customs of Antiquity : The wife, upon her second marriage, being obliged to resign the house to the heir of the family. This circumstance is inserted with great judgment : the Suitors were determined to seize it upon marriage with *Penelope*, as appears from the second *Odyssey*.

*What mighty labours would he then create,
 To seize his treasures, and divide his state,
 The royal Palace to the Queen convey,
 Or him she blesses in the bridal day ?*

H 3

Penelope

178 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

- 315 Such were his words; and *Hymen* now prepares
To light his torch, and give me up to cares;
Th' afflictive hand of wrathful *Jove* to bear:
A wretch the most compleat that breathes the air!
Fall'n ev'n below the rights to woman due!
- 320 Careless to please, with insolence ye woo:
The gen'rous lovers, studious to succeed,
Bid their whole herds and flocks in banquets bleed;

Penelope therefore by this declaration gives the Suitors to understand, that the Palace belong'd not to her, but *Telemachus*. This assertion has a double effect; it is intended to make the Suitors less warm in their addresses; or if they persist, to set the injustice done to *Telemachus* in open view. The beauty of all the speeches of *Penelope* in this book is so obvious that it needs no explanation; *Homer* gives a very amiable character, she is good in every relation of life, merciful to the poor and stranger, a tender mother, and an affectionate wife; every period is almost a lecture of morality.

*My father, mother, all, I trust to thee;
To them, to them transfer the love of me.*

This shews the duty of the child to the parent; it may be extended to all persons to whom we owe any duty; and humanity requires that we should endeavour to ease the burthen of our friends in proportion to their calamities; we should at all times consult their happiness, but chiefly in the hour of adversity. A friend should be a support to lean upon in all our infirmities.

v. 323. By

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 179

By precious gifts the vow sincere display :
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.

325 Well-pleas'd Ulysses hears his Queen deceive
The Suitor-train, and raise a thirst to give:

Falso

v. 323. *By precious gifts the vow sincere display:
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.*

Horace, lib. 2. Sat. 5. makes a very severe reflexion upon Penelope, and in her person (I say not how justly) upon the whole sex; he gives the avarice of the Suitors as the sole reason of Penelope's chastity; and insinuates that women would sell their virtue, if men would be at the expence to buy.

*Venit enim magnum donandi parca Juventus,
Nec tantum Veneris, quantum studiosa culina.
Sic tibi Penelope frangi est: Qua si semel uno
De sene gustârit, tecum partita lucellam;
Ut canis a corio nunquam absterrebitur uncto.*

Horace had this passage in view, and imputes the coldness of Penelope to a want of generosity in her admirers. Diodorus assures us, that Venus had a Temple in Egypt dedicated to her under the title of χρυσή Ἀφροδίτη; or golden Venus; and it is her usual epithet throughout all Homer. Near Memphis there was an allotment of ground call'd the field of golden Venus: but it ought not to be conceal'd, that some persons believe she bears that name from the golden colour of her hair. Horace, to give his satyr the greater strength, puts the words into the mouth of the prophet Tiresias, a person of unerring veracity.

v. 325. *Well-pleas'd Ulysses hears his Queen deceive
The Suitor-train, and raise a thirst to give.*

This conduct may appear somewhat extraordinary both in Penelope and Ulysses; she not only takes, but asks presents from persons whom the never intends to marry: Is not this a sign either of avarice or falshood? and is not Ulysses equally guilty, who rejoices at it? But in reality, Penelope is no way faulty; she deceives the Suitors with hopes of marriage by accepting these presents, but it is for this sole reason that she accepts them; she intends

H 6

to

False hopes she kindles, but those hopes betray,
And promise, yet elude the bridal day.

to give them false hopes, and by that method to defer the nuptial hour: It is not injustice, but an equitable reprisal; they had violently wasted her treasures, and she artfully recovers part of them by a piece of refin'd management. *Dacier* defends her after another method: she believes that *Penelope* thus acts, not out of interest but honour; it was a disgrace to so great a Princess to have so many admirers, and never to receive from their hands such presents as custom not only allows, but commands; neither is *Ulysses* blameable, who rejoices at his wife's policy. He understood her intent, and being artful himself, smiles to see her artfulness.

Plutarch in his treatise of reading Poems, vindicates *Ulysses* very much in the same way: If (says that Author) *Ulysses* rejoiced at *Penelope's* art in drawing presents from the Suitors out of avarice, he discovers himself to be a sordid prostitute of his wife; but if thro' a wife foresight he hop'd by her acceptance of the presents, to get the Suitors more into his powers, by lulling them into security, and laying all their suspicions asleep, thro' a sudden prospect of marriage; if this occasion'd his joy, this joy arising from her artful management, and from a full confidence in his wife, is no way blameable, but proceeds from a sufficient and laudable cause. In short, the Suitors were enemies, and nothing could be practis'd dishonourably against them, that either *Ulysses* or *Penelope* could act consistently with their own honour.

v. 327. False hopes she kindles——] It is certain that the words in the Greek will bear a double construction, and Σίλχη θυμὸν μελιχόλις ἐνέτωσι may refer either to *Penelope* or *Ulysses*. *Enslathins* thinks they are spoken of *Ulysses*; then the meaning is, that *Ulysses* comforted himself with her amusing words, while he form'd a design very different from what her words expressed; but *Dacier* refers them to *Penelope*, perhaps with better reason: Σίλχη depends upon φέτο in the preceding line, and by thus understanding it the construction becomes easy and natural: and the sentence means, that *Penelope's* words flattered the Suitors in their hopes of marriage, while her thoughts were very distant from complying with their inclinations: This interpretation best agrees with the general design of *Penelope*, which was to act an artful part, and neither comply, nor absolutely refuse their addresses.

While

Book XVIII. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 181

- While yet she speaks, the gay *Antinous* cries,
330 Offspring of Kings, and more than woman wife!
'Tis right; 'tis man's prerogative to give,
And custom bids thee without shame receive;
Yet never, never from thy dome we move,
'Till *Hymen* lights the torch of spousal love.
- 335 The Peers dispatch their heralds to convey
The gifts of love; with speed they take the way.
A robe *Antinous* gives of shining dyes,
The varying hues in gay confusion rise
Rich from the artist's hand! twelve clasps of gold
- 340 Close to the left'ning waist the vest infold;
Down from the swelling loins, the vest unbound
Floats in bright waves redundant o'er the ground:
A bracelet rich with gold, with amber gay,
That shot effulgence like the solar ray,
- 345 *Eurymachus* presents: and ear-rings bright,
With triple stars, that cast a trembling light.
Pisander bears a necklace, wrought with art;
And ev'ry Peer, expressive of his heart,
A gift bestows: This done, the Queen ascends,
- 350 And slow behind her damsel train attends.
Then to the dance they form the vocal strain,
'Till *Hesperus* leads forth the starry train;

And now he raises, as the day-light fades,

His golden circlet in the deep'ning shades :

355 Three vases heap'd with copious fires display

O'er all the palace a fictitious day ;

From space to space the torch wide-beaming burns,

And sprightly damsels trim the rays by turns.

To whom the King : Ill suits your sex to stay

360 Alone with men ! ye modest maids, away !

Go, with the Queen the spindle guide or cull

(The partners of her cares) the silver wool ;

v. 355. *Three vases heap'd with copious fires display
O'er all the Palace a fictitious day.]*

The word in the Greek is λαμπτήρ, or a vase which was plac'd upon a tripod, upon which the Ancients burnt dry and oftentimes odoriferous wood, to give at once both perfume and light. *Eustathius* explains it by χυτρίπυς, or a vessel rais'd on feet in the nature of an hearth. *Hesychius* explains λαμπτήρ, an hearth placed in the middle of the house or hall, on which they burnt dry wood with intermingled torches to enlighten it. It is strange that there is no mention of lamps, but only torches, in *Homer* ; undoubtedly lamps were not in use in *Greece*, although much earlier found out by the *Hebrews* : Thus *Exod.* xxv. 6. oil is mentioned, and injoin'd to be used in giving light to the sanctuary.

v. 359. ———— *Ill suits your sex to stay
Alone with men ! ye modest maids, away !]*

Homer is perpetually giving us lessons of decency and morality. It may be thought that this interlude between *Ulysses* and the damsels of *Penelope* is foreign to the action of the *Odyssey* ; but in reality it is far from it : the Poet undertook to describe the disorders which the absence of a Prince occasions in his family ; this passage is an instance of it ; and *Homer* with good judgment makes these wantons declare their contempt of *Ulysses*, and their favour to their Suitors, that we may acknowledge the justice of their punishment in the subsequent parts of the *Odyssey*.

Be

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 183

Be it my task the torches to supply

Ev'n till the morning lamp adorns the sky;

365 Ev'n till the morning, with unwearied care,

Sleepless I watch; for I have learn'd to bear.

Scornful they heard: *Melantho*, fair and young,

(*Melantho*, from the loins of *Dolius* sprung,

Who with the Queen her years an infant led,

370 With the soft fondness of a daughter bred)

Chiefly derides: regardless of the cares

Her Queen endures, polluted joys she shares

Nocturnal with *Eurymachus*: With eyes

That speak disdain, the wanton thus replies.

375 Oh! whether wanders thy distemper'd brain,

Thou bold intruder on a princely train?

Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;

Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.

Proceeds

v. 377. Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;

Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.]

I flatter my self that I have given the true sense of *χαλκήϊος δέμος*, and *λίσσιν*: In Greece the beggars in winter retir'd by night to public forges for their warmth, or to some rendezvous where they entertain'd themselves as it were in a common assembly. *Eustathius* explains *λίσσιν* to be a public place without any doors, where beggars were used to lodge. *Hesychius* gives us several interpretations of the word, that it signifies an assembly, a conversation; it implies also public stoves or baths; and *Eustathius* informs us from *Aristophanes*, that beggars used to take up their lodgings in the public baths, as well as in these places mention-

- Proceeds this boldness from a turn of soul,
380 Or flows licentious from the copious bowl?
Is it that vanquish'd *Irus* swells thy mind?
A foe may meet thee of a braver kind,
Who shortning with a storm of blows thy stay,
Shall send thee howling all in blood away!
385 To whom with frowns: O impudent in wrong!
Thy Lord shall curb that insolence of tongue;
Know to *Telemachus* I tell th' offence:
The scourge, the scourge shall lash thee into sense.

ed by *Homer*; χαλκίῳς δῆμος is an office of men that work in brass. He further observes that these two places are used after the same manner in *Hesiod*.

Πὰρ δ' ἔθι χαλκίῳς δῶμον, καὶ ἐπ' ἀλλὰ λίσχον
"Ὀρη χαμῆρη, ἐπύτε κρύος ἄσπρας εἶργον
"Ἰοχάνα————

It may not be improper to observe, that πὰρ δ' ἔθι δῶμον χαλκίῳς is very ill translated by *Accede Aeneas sedem* in the *Latin* version; it should be *fuge officinam Atriam*.

v. 381. *Is it that vanquish'd Irus swells thy mind?*] The word in *Homer* is ἀλῆς, which is used in various places; sometimes (observes *Plutarch* in his treatise upon reading Poems) it signifies being disquieted in mind,

"Ὡς ἔφατ'· ἡ ἀλῆς ἀπεβήσατο, τρίπετο δ' αἰνῶς.

In other places it implies an insolent joy, or boasting; and then he quotes this verse,

"Ἡ ἀλῆς ὅτι Ἴρου ἐνικήσας.

With

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 185

With conscious shame they hear the stern rebuke,
390 Nor longer durst sustain the sovereign look.

Then to the servile task the Monarch turns
His royal hands; Each torch refulgent burns
With added day: mean-while in museful mood,
Absorpt in thought, on vengeance fix'd he stood.
395 And now the Martial Maid, by deeper wrongs
To rouse *Ulysses*, points the Suitors' tongues:
Scornful of age, to taunt the virtuous man,
Thoughtless and gay, *Eurymachus* began.

Hear me (he cries) confederates and friends!
400 Some God no doubt this stranger kindly sends;

The

v. 395. *And now the Martial Maid, by deeper wrongs
To rouse Ulysses, points the Suitors' tongues.*]

It may be thought very unjustifiable in *Homer*, to introduce *Minerva* exciting the Suitors to violence. *Dacier* defends the Poet, by shewing that the sentiment is conformable to true Theology: and the all-wise Author of our being is pleas'd sometimes to harden the hearts of the wicked, (or rather to permit them to harden their own hearts) that they may fill up the measure of their crimes, and be ripe for judgment: Yet we are not to imagine, that any person is necessitated to be wicked: It is not the hardening the heart that originally makes men impious, but they are first impious, and then they are delivered over to an hardness of heart.

But *Homer* may be justify'd another way; and *Minerva* may be understood to act thus in favour of *Ulysses*: The Goddess of Wisdom insinuates the Suitors to insult that Heroe, and hasten their own destruction.

v. 400. *Some God, no doubt, this stranger kindly sends.*] *Aristotle* affirms that *Homer* is the father of Poetry; not only of the Epic, but also of the Dramatick; that he taught how to write
Tragedy

186 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

The shining baldness of his head survey,
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.

Then to the King that levell'd haughty Troy.

Say, if large hire can tempt thee to employ

405 Those hands in work? to tend the rural trade,
To dress the walk, and form th' embow'ring shade.

Tragedy in the *Iliad*, and Comedy by several short sketches in the *Odyssey*. *Eusebius* here remarks, that he likewise gave a model for *Satyr*, of which the *Cyclops* of *Euripides*, still extant, is an example; (which is a satyric Poem founded upon the story of *Polyphemus* in *Homer*.) I confess my eye is not sharp enough to see the dignity of these railleries; and it may be thought that *Homer* is the father of another kind of Poetry, I mean the *Farce*, and that these low conceits are no way to be justify'd, but by being put into the mouths of the Suitors, persons of no dignity or character. *Longinus* brings such descriptions of the Suitors, as instances of the decay of *Homer's* genius. When that declines (observes that Author) Poets commonly please themselves with painting Manners; such is *Homer's* description of the lives led by the Suitors in the Palace of *Ulysses*: for in reality all that description is a kind of Comedy, wherein the different characters of men are painted.

v. 401. *The shining baldness of his head survey,*

It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.]

This in *Dacier's* judgment is a raillery purely satyrical; it is drawn from the shining glass of an old man's bald head. But if this be purely satyrical, to be a satyr is to be a bad man: To rally natural infirmities is inhumanity: Old age is venerable, and the bald head as well as the gray hair is an honour, and ought not to be the subject of raillery. I doubt not but *Homer* put it into the mouth of *Enymachus* to make him more odious, and to shew us that the same man who invades his Prince's property, insults the stranger, and outrages the poor, pays no deference to old age, but is base enough to condemn what he ought to honour. Vice and folly are the province of Satyr, not human infirmity.

So

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 187

So food and rayment constant will I give:
But idly thus thy soul prefers to live,
And starve by strolling, not by work to thrive.

410 To whom incens'd; Should we, O Prince, engage
In rival tasks beneath the burning rage
Of summer suns, were both constrain'd to wield
Foodless, the scythe along the burthen'd field;

Or

V. 412. ————— Were both constrain'd to wield,

Foodless, the scythe along the burthen'd field.]

I doubt not but such employments as these, now only suitable to low life, will seem mean to many Readers, and unworthy of the dignity of Epic Poetry: It is no defence to say that they are mention'd by a beggar, and therefore agreeable to his character: The words are address'd to a Prince, and suppose that a skill in such works was not unusual to persons of eminent stations; otherwise the challenge of *Ulysses* is ridiculously absurd. Who could forbear laughing, if he should hear one of our beggars challenge a Peer, to plow or mow with him all day without eating? The truth is, the greatest persons follow'd such employments without any diminution of their dignities; nay, a skill in such works as Agriculture was a glory even to a King: *Homer* here places it upon a level with military science, and the knowledge of the cultivation of the ground is equall'd to glory in war. In the preface to the *Pastorals* of *Virgil* (but not written by *Mr. Dryden*) there is a passage that shews that the same simplicity of manners prevail'd amongst the Antient *Latins*, as amongst the Antient *Greeks*: "It ought not (says that Author) to surprize a modern writer, that Kings laid down their first rudiments of government in tending their mute subjects, their herds and flocks: Nor ought it to seem strange that the master of the horse to King *Latinus* in the ninth *Æneid* was found in the homely employment of cleaving blocks, when news of the first skirmish between the *Trojans* and *Latins* was brought to him." This passage fully vindicates *Homer*, and shews that such employments were no dishonour to the greatest persons; but there are two errors in the quotation; it is not taken from the ninth, but the seventh *Æneid*;

188 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

Or should we labour while the plowshare wounds
 415 With steers of equal strength, the allotted grounds;
 Beneath my labours how thy wond'ring eyes
 Might see the fable field at once arise!
 Should *Jove* dire war unloose, with spear and shield
 And nodding helm, I tread th' ensanguin'd field,
 420 Fierce in the van: Then wou'dst thou, wou'dst thou say,
 Misname me glutton in that glorious day?

meid; nor is *Tyrrheus*, who cleaves the blocks, master of the horse to King *Latinus*, but the intendant of his flocks; or as *Dryden* translates it,

Tyrrheus, chief ranger to the Latian King.

———*Tyrrheusque pater, cui regia parent
 Armenta, & late custodia credita campi.*

Tyrrheus is no otherwife a warrior, than as a deer under his charge, being kill'd, engages him in a quarrel, and he arms the rustics to encounter the *Trojans* who slew it.

———*vocat agmina Tyrrheus
 Quadrifidem quercum cuneis ut forte coactis
 Scindebat*———

*Tyrrheus, the foster-father of the beast,
 Then clench'd an hatchet in his horny fist;
 But held his hand from the descending stroke,
 And left his wedge within the cloven oak.*

'Tis true, tho' *Tyrrheus* was not master of the horse to the King, yet his office was a post of dignity, otherwise it had been very easy for *Virgil* to have given him a more noble employment.

No,

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 189

No, thy ill-judging thoughts the brave disgrace;

'Tis thou injurious art, not I am base.

Proud, to seem brave among a coward train?

425 But know thou art not valorous, but vain.

Gods! should the stern *Ulysses* rise in might,

These gates would seem too narrow for thy flight.

While yet he speaks, *Eurymachus* replies,

With indignation flashing from his eyes.

430 Slave, I with justice might deserve the wrong,

Should I not punish that opprobrious tongue;

Irreverent to the Great, and uncontroll'd,

Art thou from wine, or innate folly, bold?

Perhaps, these outrages from *Irus* flow,

435 A worthless triumph o'er a worthless foe!

He said, and with full force a footstool threw:

Whirl'd from his arm with erring rage it flew;

Ulysses, cautious of the vengeful foe,

Stoops to the ground, and disappoints the blow.

440 Not so a youth who deals the goblet round,

Full on his shoulder it inflicts a wound,

Dash'd from his hand the sounding goblet flies,

He shrieks, he reels, he falls, and breathless lies.

Then wild uproar and clamour mounts the sky,

445 'Till mutual thus the Peers indignant cry;

O had

O had this stranger sunk to realms beneath,
 To the black realms of darkness and of death,
 Ere yet he trod these shores! to strife he draws
 Peer against Peer; and what the weighty cause?

450 A vagabond! for him the great destroy
 In vile ignoble jars, the feast of joy.

To whom the stern *Telemachus* uprose!
 Gods! what wild folly from the goblet flows?
 Whence this unguarded openness of soul,
 455 But from the licence of the copious bowl?
 Or heav'n delusion sends. But hence, away!
 Force I forbear, and without force obey.

Silent, abash'd, they hear the stern rebuke,
 'Till thus *Amphinomus* the silence broke.

460 True are his words, and he whom truth offends
 Not with *Telemachus*, but truth contends;

v. 457. *Force I forbear, and without force obey.*] This is very artful in *Telemachus*; he had spoken warmly in defence of *Ulysses*, and he apprehends lest he should have provoked the Suitors too far; he therefore softens his expression, to avoid suspicions of a latent cause, why he interells himself so vigorously in vindication of a beggar, against the Princes of the country. Besides, too obstinate an opposition might have provoked the Suitors to have continued all night in the Palace, which would have hinder'd *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* from concerting their measures to bring about their destruction: *Telemachus* therefore to induce them to withdraw uses menaces, but menaces approaching to persuasion; if he had used violence, matters must immediately have come to extremities.

Let

Let not the hand of violence invade
 The rev'rend stranger, or the spotless maid;
 Retire we hence! but crown with rosy wine
 465 The flowing goblet to the pow'rs divine;
 Guard he his guest beneath whose roof he stands:
 This justice, this the social right demands.

The Peers assent; the goblet *Melinus* crown'd
 With purple juice, and bore in order round;
 470 Each Peer successive his libation pours
 To the blest Gods that fill th'aereal bow'rs;

Then

v. 470. *Each Peer successive his libation pours
 To the blest Gods———*].

We have already observed that libations were made to the Gods before and after meals; here we see the Suitors offer their libation before they retire to repose. We are not to ascribe this religious act to the piety of these debauchees, but to the customs of the times; they practise not true religion, but only the exteri-
 470 riors of it; they are not pious, but fashionable.

The action of this book is comprehended in a very short duration of time; it begins towards the close of the day, and ends at the time when the Suitors withdraw to repose; this is the evening and part of the night of the thirty-ninth day.

In general, this book is in the *Greek* very beautiful: The combat between *Irus* and *Ulysses* is naturally described; it is indeed between beggars, but yet not without dignity, it being almost of the same nature with the single combats practis'd amongst Heroes in their most solemn games; as is evident from that in the *Iliad*, at the funeral of *Patroclus*. I could wish *Homer* had not condescended to those low jests and mean raileries towards the conclusion: 'Tis true, they are not without effect, as they agree with the characters of the Suitors, and make *Ulysses* a spectator of the disorders of his own family, and provoke him to a speedy vengeance: But might not more serious provocations have been found
 out,

192 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XVIII.

Then swill'd with wine, with noise the crowds obey,
And rushing forth tumultuous reel away.

out, such as might become the gravity and majesty of Epic Poetry? or if gaiety was essential to his characters, are quibbles so too? These may be thought to be of the same level with those conceits which *Milton* puts into the mouth of the Devil, and which disgrace his Poem. But the dignity, the tenderness, and justness of the sentiments, in all the speeches of *Penelope*, more than atone for the low raileries of *Enrymachus*.



THE



Discourse of Ulysses with Penelope, who does not know him again.



THE
NINETEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.



I

The



The A R G U M E N T.

The Discovery of Ulysses to Euryclea.

Ulysses and his son remove the weapons out of the Armory. Ulysses in conversation with Penelope gives a fictitious account of his adventures; then assures her he had formerly entertain'd her husband in Crete; and describes exactly his person and dress, affirms to have heard of him in Phæacia and Thesprotia, and that his return is certain, and within a month. He then goes to bathe, and is attended by Euryclea, who discovers him to be Ulysses by the scar upon his leg, which he formerly received in hunting the wild boar on Parnassus. The Poet inserts a digression, relating that accident, with all its particulars.

THE

THE
NINETEENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

CONSULTING secret with the blue-ey'd Maid,
Still in the dome divine *Ulysses* stay'd:
Revenge mature for act inflam'd his breast;
And thus the Son the fervent Sire address'd.

Instant

NOTES.

The Scene still continues in the Palace of *Ulysses*; but new persons are introduced to carry on the action, and diversify the story; This book opens with a repetition from the sixteenth; the Ancients mark'd it with an Asterisk, without any Obelisk, to shew that it was here inserted with propriety: As we draw nearer to the conclusion of the Poem, the repetitions are more frequent. *Virgil* has generally avoided them, and indeed it may be observed, that these two Poets differ in nothing more than the manner of their elocution: *Virgil* is full, but *Homer* even overflows; and this agrees with their general characters. *Homer* is like those

I 2

Painters

- 5 Instant convey those fleetly stores of war
 To distant rooms, dispos'd with secret care:
 The cause demanded by the Suitor-train,
 To sooth their fears a specious reason feign:
 Say, since *Ulysses* left his natal coast,
 10 Obscene with smoke, their beamy lustre lost,
 His arms deform'd, the roof they won't adorn:
 From the glad walls inglorious lumber torn.
 Suggest, that *Jove* the peaceful thought inspir'd,
 Lest they by sight of swords to fury fir'd,
 15 Dishonest wounds, or violence of soul,
 Defame the bridal feast, and friendly bowl.

Painters of whom *Apelles* used to complain, that they left nothing to be imagin'd by the spectator, and made too accurate representations; but *Virgil* is like *Timantes* in *Pliny*. *Timanti plurimum adfuit ingenii, in omnibus operibus ejus intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur*: and again, *ostendit etiam quæ occultat*.

Eustathius observes, that the unexpected opportunity to remove the arms in the absence of the Suitors, occasions this repetition; In the sixteenth book *Ulysses* told *Telemachus* he would give a sign when he should make the removal, despairing of an opportunity to give a publick direction, without danger from the Suitors; he therefore wisely lays hold of the present hour which happily favours his desires, and enjoins the arms to be remov'd immediately.

The

Book XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 197

The Prince obedient to the sage command,

To *Euryclea* thus: The female band

In their apartments keep; secure the doors:

20 These swarthy arms among the covert stores
Are seemlier hid; my thoughtless youth they blame,
Imbrown'd with vapor of the smould'ring flame.

In happy hour, (pleas'd *Euryclea* cries)

Tutor'd by early woes, grow early wise!

25 Inspect with sharpen'd sight, and frugal care,

Your patrimonial wealth, a prudent heir.

But who the lighted taper will provide,

(The female train retir'd,) your toils to guide?

Without infringing hospitable right,

30 This guest (he cry'd) shall bear the guiding light:

I cheer no lazy vagrants with repast;

They share the meal that earn it ere they taste.

He said; from female ken the strait secures

The purpos'd deed, and guards the bolted doors:

v. 18. —————the female band

In their apartments keep, &c.]

It is not without sufficient reason that *Telemachus* distrusts the maids; many of them were in the interest of the Suitors: it was therefore necessary to conceal the place to which the arms were convey'd, lest they should betray the secret. *Eustathius*.

198 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XIX.

35 Auxiliar to his son, *Ulysses* bears

The plummy-crested helms, and pointed spears

With shields indented deep in glorious wars.

Minerva viewless on her charge attends,

And with her golden lamp his toil befriends:

Not

v. 38. *Minerva* ——— with her golden lamp ———] The office here ascrib'd to *Minerva* gave great offence to *Rapin*, and he censur'd it as mean, and unworthy of the Goddess; but *Estathius* fully vindicates *Homer*; *Pallas* is here an allegorical *Deity* intended by the Poet to express the wisdom of *Ulysses*; he acts with as much prudence as if *Minerva* herself guided him in all his ways. We are to gather from this description, that *Ulysses* form'd all the actions of this night with the utmost wisdom, or according to the Greek proverb, ἐν νυκτὶ βέλῃ, the counsels of this night were regulated with the exactest prudence and secrecy. *Spondannus* observes, that *Callimachus*, a statuary in *Athens*, made an image of *Minerva* according to this picture in *Homer*: She held a lamp of gold, which was fill'd with an oil of such an unwasting nature, as not to want to be replenish'd in the space of a whole year. See lib. 1. of *Pausanias*. *Dacier* judges, that tho' a lamp was unknown in the days of *Ulysses*, yet it might not be so in the days of *Homer*, and therefore he might speak of it; for instance, the trumpet was not known in the *Trojan* war, yet *Homer* mentions it, because it was used in his age. But this is no answer; for *Homer* does not say that the trumpet was used during the siege of *Troy*; if he had, he would have been guilty of a gross Anachronism, but he speaks of it by way of allusion, as a thing well known in his time. Here therefore the case is different; for *Ulysses* is the person who is suppos'd to make use of this lamp, and *Dacier* allows that it was unknown in his age, and consequently he ought not to use it at all. It may therefore perhaps be most probable, that *Callimachus* did not form his statue from this original; or if this be not allowed, that he fell into an error, and gave the Goddess a lamp instead of a torch.

I will only further add, that this office of *Minerva* may be vindicated from all meanness, by observing that it is not the bare act of carrying the torch which the Goddess here executes; she improves it into a Miracle; the whole Palace is enlighten'd with a celestial

40 Not such the sickly beams, which unsincere,
Gild the gross vapor of this nether sphere!
A present Deity the Prince confess'd,
Aud rap'd with ecstasy the Sire address'd.

What miracle thus dazzles with surprize!

45 Distinct in rows the radiant columns rise:
The walls where-e'er my wond'ring sight I turn,
And roofs, amidst a blaze of glory burn!
Some visitant of pure ethereal race,
With his bright presence deigns the dome to grace.

50 Be calm, replies the Sire; to none impart,
But oft revolve the vision in thy heart:

a celestial fire, and *Ulysses* and *Telemachus* gather full assurances of her favour and success from that miraculous illumination: this circumstance raises the description out of lowliness into dignity.

v. 48. *Some visitant of pure ethereal race.*] *Enslathius* gives us a twofold explication of the words,

'Αὐτὰ τοὶ δῖοι ἐστὶ θεῶν—————

They imply either that the Goddess *Themis* descended; or that it is the custom of celestial powers to manifest themselves in such illuminations, without appearing visibly. The latter interpretation seems most natural, and makes the construction easy, whereas the other is scarce to be understood without supplying *ἀπὸ* before *θεῶν*: otherwise it must be allow'd, that the former opinion is not unhappy: *Ulysses* tells his son, that the Goddess of justice is sent by the Gods to assist him in taking vengeance on the Suitors: *Themis* is a very proper Deity to be introduc'd upon such an occasion, and shews that *Ulysses* proceeded upon the strictest rules of equity, in the distribution of his rewards and punishments. But the passage will not admit this sense, it being evidently *Pallas*, not *Themis*, who appears.

Celestials, mantl'd in excess of light,

Can visit unapproach'd by mortal fight.

Seek thou repose; whilst here I sole remain,

55 T'explore the conduct of the female train :

The pensive Queen perchance desires to know

The series of my toils, to sooth her woe.

With tapers flaming day his train attends,

His bright alcove th' obsequious youth ascends:

60 Soft slumb'rous shades his drooping eye-lids close,

'Till on her eastern throne *Aurora* glows.

Whilst, forming plans of death, *Ulysses* stay'd,

In council secret with the Martial Maid;

Attendent Nymphs in beauteous order wait

65 The Queen, descending from her bow'r of state.

Her cheeks the warmer blush of *Venus* wear,

Chasten'd with coy *Diana's* pensive air.

An ivory seat with silver ringlets grac'd,

By fam'd *Icmalius* wrought, the menials plac'd:

v. 69. *By fam'd Icmalius wrought*—————] *Homer* in both his Poems takes all opportunities of celebrating the famous artificers of Antiquity: I doubt not but most of them were his particular friends, and to do them honour, he gave them place in his works, and render'd their names and his own gratitude immortal. We may likewise learn the nature of the noblest pieces of art in *Homer's* days, from his Poetry.

With

Book XIX. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 201

70 With ivory filver'd thick the foot-stool shone,
 O'er which the panther's various hide was thrown.
 The sovereign seat with graceful air she press'd;
 To different tasks their toil the Nymphs address'd :
 The golden goblets some, and some restor'd
 75 From stains of luxury the polish'd board:
 These to remove th' expiring embers came,
 While those with unctuous fir foment the flame.

'Twas then *Melantho* with imperious mien
 Renew'd th' attack, incontinent of spleen:

80 Avaunt, she cry'd, offensive to my sight!
 Deem not in ambush here to lurk by night,
 Into the woman-state asquint to pry;
 A day-devourer, and an ev'ning-spy!
 Vagrant begone! before this blazing brand
 85 Shall urge——and wav'd it hissing in her hand.

Th' insulted Heroe rous'd his wrathful eyes,
 And, Why, so turbulent of soul? he cries;

v. 82. *Into the woman-state asquint to pry.*] This is the true reason why *Melantho* is out of humour (says *Madam Dacier* :) She had some affairs upon her hands, which demanded no witnesses, meaning the vicious commerce between her and *Eurymachus*. Women never forgive their own sex a frailty. *Dacier* is undoubtedly in an error; *Eurymachus* in the end of the last book left the Palace, and therefore *Melantho* could not speak out of any apprehensions of having a stop put to her affairs this night, by the presence of *Ulysses*.

202 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XIX.

Can these lean shrivel'd limbs unnerv'd with age,
These poor but honest rags, enkindle rage?

90 In crowds we wear the badge of hungry Fate,
And beg, degraded from superior state!

Constrain'd! a rent-charge on the rich I live;
Reduc'd to crave the good I once could give:
A Palace, wealth, and slaves, I late possess'd,

95 And all that makes the Great be call'd the bless'd:
My gate, an emblem of my open soul,
Embrac'd the poor, and dealt a bounteous dole.
Scorn not the sad reverse, injurious maid!
'Tis *Jove's* high will, and be his will obey'd!

100 Nor think thy self exempt: that rosy prime
Must share the general doom of with'ring time:
To some new channel soon, the changeful tide
Of royal grace th' offended Queen may guide;
And her lov'd Lord unplume thy tow'ring pride.

105 Or were he dead, 'tis wisdom to beware:
Sweet blooms the Prince beneath *Apollo's* care;

Your

v. 196. *Sweet blooms the Prince beneath Apollo's care.*] It may be ask'd why *Telemachus* is said to owe the preservation of his life to *Apollo*? *Enstathius* answers, that he was call'd *Ὁ Σὺς κρυπτοβίος* by Antiquity; and that *Daphne* from being his favourite was named *κρυβαλίσια*: But perhaps that epithet was appropriated to *Apollo*, because all immature deaths in the male sex were ascribed to him, as they were to *Diana* in the female; it may

Your deeds with quick impartial eye surveys;
Potent to punish what he cannot praise.

Her keen reproach had reach'd the Sov'reign's ear;

110 Loquacious insolent! she cries, forbear:

To thee the purpose of my soul I told,
Venial discourse unblam'd with him to hold.
The storied labours of my wand'ring Lord,
To sooth my grief, he haply may record:

may therefore be said with great propriety that it is owing to the favour of *Apollo*, that *Telemachus* had not died an immature death, or that he was arriv'd to manhood: *Eustathius* adds, that *Apollo*, as he is the Sun, may be called the nourisher of all things that breathe, as well as of the inanimate creation; it is owing to his influence that every being comes to maturity, and in this sense likewise he may be called *κυροποιός*. What *Eustathius* ascribes to *Daphne*, *Dacier* applies to *Diana*, and tells us, that she was called *κυροβαλίστα*, and that the Antients celebrated a festival in her honour for the health of their infants.

V. 110. *Loquacious insolent!* —] Were this place to be render'd literally, it would be thus, *Thou bold impudent bitch; Σαρβαλὴν κύον ἀδελῆς*. It is spoken by *Penelope*. In our age it is an expression so vulgar, as not to be uttered in common conversation, much less in Epic Poetry: 'Tis true, it fully expresses the height of impudence, and in *Homer's* time it was no more mean, than calling a coward a *deer*, and both the expressions are joined together in the first of the *Iliad*.

Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer.

It is there spoken by *Achilles*: and in another place of the *Iliad* *Jupiter* applies it to his wife, and calls *Juno* an impudent bitch: a plain indication that the expression was not mean, as it is at this day, because it was used by the greatest of Heroes, and the Supreme of Gods.

115 Yet him, my guest, thy venom'd rage hath stung;
 Thy head shall pay the forfeit of thy tongue!
 But thou on whom my palace-cares depend,
Eurytomè, regard the stranger friend:
 A seat soft spread with furry spoils prepare;

120 Due-distant, for us both to speak, and hear.

The menial Fair obeys with duteous haste:
 A seat adorn'd with furry spoils she plac'd:
 Due-distant for discourse the Heroe sate;
 When thus the Sov'reign from her chair of state:

125 Reveal, obsequious to my first demand,
 Thy name, thy lineage, and thy natal land.

v. 116. *Thy head shall pay the forfeit of thy tongue!]* The expression in the *Greek* is remarkable.

————— Ὅ σὴ κεφαλῇ ἀναμάξῃς.

which you shall wipe upon your own head, or as *Enstatius* explains it, "a crime which you shall make to cleave to your own head:" a similar expression (adds the same Author) occurs in *Sophocles*.

————— καὶ πὶ λείροισιν πόδα
 Κηλίδας ἐξιμάξῃς.

From whence it appears, that the blood that was found upon the sword was wip'd upon the head of the slain; an intimation that his own blood was fallen upon the head of the deceas'd, and the living were free from it. This is a very remarkable custom, and there are many expressions like it in the scriptures; namely *his blood be upon his own head*. It was customary amongst the *Romans* to wash their hands, in token of innocence and purity from blood: Thus the *Roman Governor* wash'd his hands, and said, *I am innocent of the blood of this just person*.

He

Book XIX. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 205

- He thus: O Queen! whose far-resounding fame,
Is bounded only by the starry frame:
Consummate pattern of imperial sway;
130 Whose pious rule a warlike race obey!
In wavy gold thy summer vales are dress'd;
Thy autumns bend with copious fruit oppress'd:
With flocks and herds each grassy plain is stor'd;
And fish of ev'ry fin thy seas afford:
135 Their affluent joys the grateful realms confess;
And bless the Pow'r that still delights to bless.
Gracious permit this pray'r, imperial Dame!
Forbear to know my lineage, or my name:
Urge not this breast to heave, these eyes to weep;
140 In sweet oblivion let my sorrow sleep!

v. 129. *Consummate pattern of imperial sway.*] Homer here gives an amiable picture of a mild and just Government: It is a truth certain and universal, where the subject enjoys the fruits of his industry, the earth will always be well cultivated, and bring forth in abundance; the sea will furnish the land with plenty of fishes, and men will plant when they are sure to gather the fruits. It is the constant observation of all travellers, that the worst situation under an easy government enjoys more plenty, and is fuller of inhabitants, than the best soil and happiest situation under an arbitrary power. This whole passage is very beautiful, and the more beautiful because the words proceed from the mouth of a King.

My

206 HOMER's ODYSSEY. Book XIX.

My woes awak'd will violate your ear;
And to this gay censorious train, appear
A winy vapour melting in a tear.

}

Their gifts the Gods resum'd (the Queen rejoin'd.)

145 Exterior grace, and energy of mind;

When the dear partner of my nuptial joy,
Auxiliar troops combin'd, to conquer *They*.
My Lord's protecting hand alone wou'd raise
My drooping verdure, and extend my praise!

150 Peers from the distant *Samian* shore resort;

Here with *Dulichians* join'd, besiege the Court:
Zacynthus, green with ever-shady groves,
And *Ithaca*, presumptuous boast their loves:
Obtruding on my choice a second Lord,

155 They press the *Hymenean* rite abhorr'd.

Mis-rule thus mingling with domestic cares,
I live regardless of my state-affairs:
Receive no stranger-guest, no poor relieve;
But ever for my Lord in secret grieve!—

160 This art, instinct by some celestial pow'r,

I try'd, elusive of the bridal hour:
“ Ye Peers, I cry, who press to gain a heart,
“ Where dead *Ulysses* claims no future part;

“ Rebate

- " Rebate your loves, each rival suit suspend,
 165 " 'Till this funeral web my labours end:
 " Cease, till to good *Laertes* I bequeath
 " A pall of state, the ornament of death.
 " For when to Fate he bows, each *Grecian* dame
 " With just reproach were licens'd to defame;
 170 " Shou'd He, long honour'd in supreme command,
 " Want the last duties of a daughter's hand.
 The fiction pleas'd! their loves I long elude;
 The night still ravell'd, what the day renew'd,
 Three years successful in my art conceal'd,
 175 My ineffectual fraud the fourth reveal'd:
 Befriended by my own domestic spies,
 The woof unwrought the Suitor-train surprize.
 From nuptial rites they now no more recede,
 And fear forbids to falsify the brede.
 180 My anxious parents urge a speedy choice,
 - And to their suffrage gain the filial voice:
 For Rule mature, *Telemachus* deplores
 His dome dishonour'd, and exhausted stores——
 But stranger! as thy days seem full of fate,
 185 Divide discourse, in turn thy birth relate:
 Thy Port asserts thee of distinguish'd race;
 No poor un-father'd product of disgrace.

Prince!

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Princess! he cries, renew'd by your command,
 The dear remembrance of my native land,
 190 Of secret grief unseals the fruitful source;
 And tears repeat their long-forgotten course!
 So pays the wretch, whom fate constrains to roam,
 The dues of nature to his natal home!——
 But inward on my soul let sorrow prey;
 195 Your sovereign Will my duty bids obey.

Crete awes the circling waves, a fruitful soil!
 And ninety cities crown the sea-born Isle:

Mix'd

v. 196, &c. *Crete*——] It is not without a good reason that *Ulysses* is so particular in the Geography of *Crete*; he does it, that *Penelope* from the knowledge of the truth which he speaks concerning that Island, may be induc'd to give the reader credit to his succeeding fictions. In the *Iliad*, *Homer* calls *Crete* *ἑκατόμυρος*, or the Island with an hundred cities, *lib.* 2.

Crete's hundred cities pour forth all her sons.

Here he affirms it to have no more than ninety. *Strabo* is very full upon this difficulty, *lib.* 10. *Ephorus* (says that Author) judges that ten cities were built by the *Dorians* after the *Trojan* war, under *Althamenes*; and therefore *Ulysses* here mentions *Crete* as having only ninety: But this opinion carries no probability. Others affirm, that ten cities were demolished by the enemies of *Idomeneus*, but this is no more than a conjecture: The truth is, *Homer* does not affirm that there were an hundred cities in the time of the war with *Troy*, but in his own age; for the Poet in that place speaks in his own person) if he had put the words into the mouth of any one who had liv'd in the time of the war, he would not have called it the Isle of the hundred, but ninety cities, according to this description of *Ulysses*; it being very improbable, that ten of the *Cretan* cities should be destroy'd, either during

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Mix'd with her genuine sons, adopted names
In various tongues avow their various claims:

Cydonians,

the war, or after the return of *Idomenus*; for *Homer* himself testifies that he return'd safe to *Crete* with all his soldiers, *lib. 3.* of the *Odyssey*.

*And those whom Idomen from Ilion's plain
Had led, secretly cross'd the dreadful main.*

And therefore he had sufficient forces to defend his country: But tho' we allow that those ten cities had been destroy'd after his return, yet how could *Ulysses* come to the knowledge of it, having neither been in *Crete*, nor met with any *Cretan* to inform him in all his voyages? It is therefore probable that in the time of the *Trojan* war *Crete* had no more than ninety cities, but an hundred in the days of *Homer*: and this fully reconciles the *Iliad* with the *Odyssey*; in the *Odyssey* it is *Ulysses* that speaks, in the *Iliad*, *Homer*.

Virgil speaks of *Crete* after the manner of *Homer*.

*Crete Jovis magni medio jacet insula ponto
Centum urbes habitant magnas, uberrima regna.*

The other ten cities were built by the *Dorians* (as *Ephorus* writes) under *Althamenes*.

v. 199. *In various tongues*——] The meaning of this is, that the natural inhabitants of *Crete* were mix'd with strangers who had settled in the Island; or as some imagine (says *Eustathius*) *Ulysses* speaks thus out of fear, lest *Penelope* should discover him not to be a native of *Crete* from his wrong pronunciation of the language of the *Cretans*. We may gather from *Strabo*, that the *Dorians* inhabited the eastern parts, the *Cydonians* the western, the *Eteo-Cretans* the southern, and the rest of the nation being most powerful, possess the plain country lying toward the north: The *Eteo-Cretans*, that is, the true *Cretans*, were the original inhabitants of the Island, and probably also the *Cydonians*. There is some difficulty in the word *ῥηγῶν*. *Andron* the Historian (continues *Strabo*) affirms, that the *Dorians* who lived near *Parnassus* planted a colony in *Crete*, and built three cities, and from thence call'd themselves

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200 *Cydonians*, dreadful with the bended yew,
And bold *Pelaſgi* boast a native's due :
The *Dorians*, plum'd amid the files of war,
Her foodful glebe with fierce *Achaïans* share ;
Cnoſſus, her capital of high command ;
205 Where ſceptred *Minos* with impartial hand
Divided Right ; each ninth revolving year
By *Jove* receiv'd, in council to confer.

His

themselves *τριχῦντες*, quasi *tripartiti*. But *Strabo* rejects this opinion of *Andron*, for these *Dorians* possess'd four cities, and their country was called *τρίπολις*; he therefore believes them to have taken that name from a triple crest, or from having them adorned with hair after the manner of a plumage, from *τρίχες* signifying hair. But perhaps *Strabo* is in a mistake, for *Thucydides*, lib. 1. p. 107. and *Diodorus*, lib. 11. pag. 60. confirm the opinion of *Andron*. The words of *Strabo* have given great trouble to the Commentators, and they ingeniously confess they cannot understand them. The expression is *τριχῦντες λίγυς ἐφαμίλλες*: The difficulty lies in *ἐφαμίλλες*; but if we read the sentence thus, all will be plain, *τριχῦντες λίγυς, ἢ ἐφαμίλλες*, that is, crests adorn'd with hair, or something like it, from *ἐφαμίλλος*, *agnalis*. *Dacier*.

v. 206. ————— [Each ninth revolving year, &c.] This *Minos*, King of *Crete*, was an excellent lawgiver; and as *Ephorus* writes, (says *Strabo*) to give his laws the greater veneration he used to descend into a cave sacred to *Jupiter*, and pretend that he had there received them from the mouth of that Deity; this is the reason why *Homer* tells us he convers'd with *Jupiter*. Thus also *Numa Pompilius* boasted of the same favour from *Ageria*, to make his decrees to be received by the *Romans*. The only difficulty is in the word *ἐννέωρος*; and it has been generally believed to imply, that *Minos* continued in the cave of *Jupiter* nine whole years: but *Casaubon* remarks, that it never signifies nine years, but every ninth year; as *τρίσσις* does not mean three days, but the third day: and this agrees exactly with the History of *Minos*, (see *Valerius Maximus*, lib. 1. cap. 2.) who was accustomed to re-
view

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His son *Deucalion* bore successive sway;

His son, who gave me first to view the day!

view and rectify all his laws every ninth year. *Plato* quotes this passage in his piece, entitled *Minos*, and puts this last observation beyond all dispute: "*Homer* tells us (says that Author) that *Minos* convers'd with *Jupiter* every ninth year, ἐνάρτα ἔτα, and "went to be instructed by him as a scholar by a master;" and a little lower he adds, ἐφάρτα δὲ ἐνάρτα ἔτας ὡς ἀνίσχον δὲος ὁ Μίνως, &c. that is, "he went into the cave of *Jupiter*, to learn new laws, "or to reform the old which he had received in the former period," τῇ περίεργα ἐνναεταίδι. This *Minos* was the most just of all mankind, and for this reason was suppos'd to be made one of the infernal judges. *Plutarch* in the life of *Demetrius* makes a fine remark upon this description of *Minos*; "*Homer* (says he) "has not honour'd with the glorious title of the Disciple of "*Jupiter*, the greatest warrior or oppressor, or a renown'd tyrant; but the man famous for his justice and probity, a legislator, "and a benefactor to mankind. *Dacier*.

v. 207. By Jove receiv'd, in council to confer.] The word in the Greek is *συνιστής*, and *Plato* fully explains it in his *Minos*; *σάπης* is the discourse, *σάπης* the person who discourses; ὁ συνιστάσης ἐν λόγῳ; others (continues *Plato*) understand it to signify the guest of *Jupiter*, συμπότην, συμπαισιν, a person that was admitted to the table of *Jupiter*, or a partaker in his diversions; but the falsity of this opinion (adds he) will sufficiently appear, if we remember, that of all the Greeks, the *Cretans* and *Lacedæmonians* who learn'd it from them, alone abstain from computations, and diversions arising from them; and in particular this is one of the laws of *Minos* enacted in *Crete*, μὴ συμπίνειν ἀλλήλοισι εἰς μέθην, commanding the *Cretans* not to drink in their entertainments to excess. Thus far *Dacier*; to which I shall add that this remark of *Plato* may perhaps contribute greatly to the glory of *Minos*, but gives little honour to *Jupiter*; it insinuates that a person who drinks with that Deity, might endanger his sobriety; otherwise to be admitted to the table of *Jupiter* is an instance of favour and familiarity, and would have been an honour to *Minos*. *Horace* is of this opinion, for speaking of *Tantalus*, lib. 1. *Carm.* he mentions it as a peculiar testimony of favour;

Occidit & Pelpis genitor, conviva dæmonum.

That is, according to *Homer's* expression, θιῶν συνιστάσης or συμπότης.

The

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- 210 The royal bed an elder issue blest,
Idomeneus, whom *Ilian* fields attest
 Of matchless deed: untrain'd to martial toil
 I liv'd inglorious in my native Isle,
 Studious of my peace; and *Æthon* is my name.
- 215 'Twas then to *Crete* the great *Ulysses* came;
 For elemental war, and wintry *Jove*,
 From *Malea's* gusty cape his navy drove
 To bright *Lucina's* fane; the shelvy coast
 Where loud *Amnisus* in the deep is lost.
- 220 His vessels moor'd, (an incommodious port!)
 The Heroe speeded to the *Cnossian* court:
 Ardent the partner of his arms to find;
 In leagues of long commutual friendship join'd.
 Vain hope! ten sons had warm'd the western strand,
- 225 Since my brave brother with his *Cretan* band

v. 218. *To bright Lucina's fane*—————] *Strabo* informs us, that upon the *Amnisus* there is a cave sacred to *Ilythia*, or *Lucina*, who presides over childbirth. The reason given by *Estathius* why the Poet places the cave by that river is too frivolous to be recited: It is probable that it was called the cave of *Ilythia*, because some great Lady had made use of it, upon an occasion in which women invoke the assistance of that Goddess; or perhaps because water is one of the great principles of generation, the temple of *Lucina* could not be placed in a more proper situation, than upon the banks of a river, and close by the sea. *Dacier*.

Had

Book XIX. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 213

Had sail'd for *Troy*: but to the genial feast
My honour'd roof receiv'd the royal guest:
Beeves for his train the *Cnossian* Peers assign,
A public treat, with jars of gen'rous wine.

230 Twelve days, while *Boreas* vex'd th' aerial space,
My hospitable dome he deign'd to grace:
And when the north had ceas'd the stormy roar,
He wing'd his voyage to the *Phrygian* shore.

Thus the fam'd Heroe, perfected in wiles,
235 With fair similitude of truth beguiles

The

v. 228. *Beeves for his train the Cnossian Peers assign,
A public treat———*]

It was not to be expected, and indeed it was almost impossible that one person should entertain *Ulysses* and his whole fleet, which consisted of twelve vessels. This passage therefore gives us a remarkable custom of Antiquity, which was, that when any person with too great a number of attendants arrived in other countries, the Prince received the chief personage and his particular friends, and the rest were entertain'd at the public expence. *Dacier.*

v. 235. *With fair similitude of truth beguiles.*] The word in the *Greek* is ἱσχυ, which has been usually interpreted to be the same with εἰρε, but those that speak with more exactness derive it from ἡσυχ, εἰκαζεν, ἀπαικονίζων πρὸς ἀλήθειαν, that is, he accommodated and adapted his fictions to probability or truth; and *Hesychius* explains the same word by εἰκαζω, ὁμοιωῶ: *Horace* almost literally translates this verse.

*Atque ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remisit,
Primo ne medium, medio ne discrepat immum.*

And indeed in this line the whole art of an Epic Poem is comprehended, which is a mixture of truths and fictions, but fictions conformable to verity; or to speak in the language of a Critic,
the

The Queen's attentive ear: dissolv'd in woe,
 From her bright eyes the tears unbounded flow.
 As snows collected on the mountain freeze;
 When milder regions breathe a vernal breeze,

the fable of the Epic Poem should be both probable and marvellous; astonishing, yet credible: if it be only credible, it differs in nothing from History; if only marvellous, it is no better than a Romance. The great secret therefore of an Epic Writer is to produce in the Reader's mind at the time both belief and astonishment, and this is here perform'd by *Ulysses*.

Dacier sur l' *Aristote*.

v. 238. *As snows collected, &c.*] It is not easy to take the point of this simile. Mons. *Perault* grievously mistakes it: "The description (says he) which *Homer* gives us of the sorrow of *Penelope* is very unaccountable; her body melted like snow upon an high mountain, when the east wind melts it, and the snow thus melted fills the rivers; thus it was that the fair cheeks of *Penelope* melted." This, says *Perault*, is translated word for word. But in reality it resembles *Homer* in nothing but the repetition of the word melted, or *τῆλε*, which in modern languages is burthensome to the ear, but not in the Greek; for the word differs from it self according to its different formation, almost as much as a new one, and gives a very distant sound; for instance, *τῆλε*, *τρυφεῖν*, *κατεῖναι*: Whereas there is almost an identity of sound in melt, melted, or melting; or in the French, *liquifie*, *liquifié*, *liquifioient*. Neither has *Perault* entered into the sense of the comparison: *τῆλε χρεῖς* is only a figurative hyperbole, as when we say a person is consum'd or wasted with grief; or perhaps *τρυφεῖν* signifies no more than humect, as *τρυφεῖς* humidus. In reality it is the Quantity of tears that is intended to be represented, and the simile is thus to be understood: The snows heap'd upon the mountains by the cold west wind, are the sorrows accumulated in the soul of *Penelope*; the warm eastern wind, which dissolves these snows, is the recital of *Ulysses*, which melts those sorrows into tears and makes them flow. When *Asanemnon* weeps, in the ninth of the *Iliad*, his tears are compared to a fountain of water falling from a rock; but women being more profuse of tears, those of *Penelope* are here compared to a river.

The

- 240 The fleecy pile obeys the whisp'ring gales,
Ends in a stream, and murmurs thro' the vales:
So, melted with the pleasing tale he told,
Down her fair cheek the copious torrent roll'd:
She to her present Lord laments him lost,
245 And views that object which she wants the most!
With'ring at heart to see the weeping Fair,
His eyes look stern, and cast a gloomy stare;

Of

v. 244. *She to her present Lord laments him lost.*] *Dacier* observes that this is added by *Homer* not for our information, for we already know it; but because it is a reflection which must necessarily occur to every Reader: It is a thing extraordinary to lament a person present, as if he were absolutely lost; and we reap a double satisfaction from the relation, by observing the behaviour of *Penelope* towards *Ulysses*, and of *Ulysses* towards *Penelope*; while he is at the same time in one sense both absent and present.

v. 247. *His eyes look stern, and cast a gloomy stare.*] There is a beautiful contrast between *Ulysses* and *Penelope*; *Penelope* indulges her passion for *Ulysses*, *Ulysses* restrains his for *Penelope*: the picture of *Ulysses* is drawn to the life, he is assaulted at once with several passions, astonishment and admiration on the one side, and compassion and a desire to comfort *Penelope* on the other; these passions being in an equal balance, and exerting an equal force, he remains fixed, like a wave driven by contrary winds, and yields to neither of their impulses; it is thus *Ulysses* continues in a steady admiration, as if he had lost all thought. This passage is too beautiful not to have been explain'd by the Ancients: *Plutarch* quotes it as an instance of the command a wise man ought to have over his passions. "*Ulysses* who was the most eloquent yet was the most silent of men, all his faculties were obedient, and subject to reason, he commanded his eye not to weep, his tongue not to speak, and his very heart not to pant or tremble: His reason influenc'd even his inward motions, and subdued the very blood and vital spirit." And in his treatise of

Moral

Of horn the stiff relentless balls appear,
 Or globes of iron fix'd in either sphere;
 250 Firm wisdom interdicts the soft'ning tear.
 A speechless interval of grief ensues,
 'Till thus the Queen the tender theme renews.
 Stranger! that e'er thy hospitable roof
Ulysses grac'd, confirm by faithful proof:
 255 Delicate to my view my warlike Lord,
 His form, his habit, and his train record.
 'Tis hard, he cries, to bring to sudden fight
 Ideas that have wing'd their distant flight:
 Rare on the mind those images are trac'd,
 260 Whose footsteps twenty winters have defac'd:

Moral Virtues, he again quotes these verses: "*Ulysses* had com-
 "pleatly subjected all his faculties to right reason, and he held
 "even his spirits, his blood, and his tears under the government of
 "his judgment." *Virgil* paints *Dido* in the infernal shades almost
 in the same colours with *Ulysses*:

*Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat,
 Nec magis incepto vultum sermone moveretur
 Quàm si dura silex, aut stet Marpesia cantes.*

v. 248. Of horn the stiff relentless balls appear.] *Enslathins*
 informs us, that *Homer* apply'd this image of horny, or *xepatrous*-
des, to the eye, because one of the coats of it is said to be of
 an horny substance; but this is merely fanciful: if another tunic
 of the eye had been *steely*, there might have been some ground
 for the allusion; for *Homer* joins both of them in the illustration,
 and only meant to represent the steadfastness of the eye of *Ulysses*,
 in this affecting interview.

But

But what I can, receive.—In ample mode,

A robe of military purple flow'd

O'er all his frame: illustrious on his breast,

The double-clasping gold the King confest.

5 In the rich woof a hound Mosaic drawn

Bore on full stretch, and seiz'd a dappl'd fawn:

v. 262, &c. *A robe of military purple, &c.*] This is a remarkable passage, and gives us an exact description of the habit of a King in the days of *Homer*, or perhaps still earlier in the days of *Ulysses*. Purple seems antiently to have been appropriated to Kings, and to them on whom they bestow'd it; thus *Judges* viii. 26. the sacred Historian mentions purple rayment that was on the Kings of *Midian*. Thus *Esther* viii. 15. a garment of fine linen and purple is given to a favourite by King *Ahasuerus*; and 1 *Maccabees* xliii. the *Jews* made a decree, that *Simon* should wear purple and gold, and that none of the people should wear purple or a buckle of gold without his permission, in token that he was the chief magistrate of the *Jews*; thus also *Mac.* x. 89. *Alexander* sent *Jonathan* a buckle of gold, as the use is to be given to such as are of the King's blood. *Ulysses* is here dress'd much after the same manner; he wears purple, and a buckle or clasp of gold, as a sign of his regality. But what I would chiefly observe is, that the art of embroidery was known in these early ages, nay perhaps was in greater perfection than at this day; the embroidery was of divers colours, as we may gather from the epithet apply'd to the fawn, ποικίλον. Some persons indeed tell us, that this was inwoven into the cloth, and was made in the loom, but the words of *Homer* will admit of the other interpretation, and it is evident that embroidery was known amongst the Orientals in the age of *Ulysses*, from *Judges* v. 20. *Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey, to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle work, of divers colours of needle-work on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?* Here is evidently mention made of embroidery, and perhaps such was this robe of *Ulysses*; but however this be, it is manifest that all manner of creatures were figur'd upon the habit of great personages, and that those creatures were inwrought so naturally as to seem to be alive.

Deep in the neck his fangs indent their hold;

They pant, and struggle in the moving gold.

Fine as a filmy web beneath it shon

270 A vest, that dazzl'd like a cloudless sun:

The female train who round him throng'd to gaze,

In silent wonder sigh'd unwilling praise.

A sabre, when the warrior press'd to part,

I gave, enamel'd with Vulcanian art:

275 A mantle purple-ting'd, and radiant vest,

Dimension'd equal to his size, express

Affection grateful to my honour'd guest.

A fav'rite herald in his train I knew,

His visage solemn sad, of sable hue:

v. 275.

———radiant vest,
Dimension'd equal to his size———]

It may be ask'd, what is the meaning of the *τεπμνέσθια χιτῶνα* here mentioned by *Ulysses*? *Enstathius* explains it by *συμμέτρος*, that is, neither too long nor too short, too wide or too scanty, but exactly corresponding to the make of the body. *Hesiod* uses the same word in the same sense; and *Hesychius* interprets it in the same manner, "Ευμνίων, καὶ μέχρι τῶν ποδῶν τεπμνέσθια μέτρον. *Dacier*.

v. 278. *A fav'rite herald*———] This is very artful in *Ulysses*: *Penelope* had ask'd what kind of person her husband was; *Ulysses* fears to give a description of himself, lest by drawing the copy like the original now before the eyes of *Penelope*, she should discover him to be *Ulysses*: He therefore diverts the enquiry, yet at the same time satisfies her curiosity, by adding a new circumstance to confirm his veracity, by describing his attendant and Herald *Eurybates*. *Dacier*.

Short

280 Short woolly curls o'erflec'd his bending head,

O'er which a promontory-shoulder spread :

Eurybates ! in whose large soul alone

Ulysses view'd an image of his own.

His speech the tempest of her grief restor'd ;

285 In all he told she recognis'd her Lord :

But when the storm was spent in plenteous show'rs,

A pause inspiriting her languish'd pow'rs,

O thou, she cry'd, whom first inclement fate

Made welcome to my hospitable gate ;

290 With all thy wants the name of poor shall end ;

Henceforth live honour'd, my domestic friend !

The vest much envy'd on your native coast,

And regal robe with figur'd gold emboss,

In happier hours my artful hand employ'd,

295 When my lov'd Lord this blissful bow'r enjoy'd :

The fall of *Troy* erroneous and forlorn

Doom'd to survive, and never to return !

Then he, with pity touch'd : O Royal Dame !

Your ever-anxious mind, and beauteous frame,

300 From the devouring rage of grief reclaim.

I not the fondness of your soul reprove

For such a Lord ! who crown'd your virgin-love

- With the dear blessing of a fair increase,
 Himself adorn'd with more than mortal grace:
 305 Yet while I speak, the mighty woe suspend;
 Truth forms my tale; to pleasing truth attend.
 The royal object of your dearest care,
 Breathes in no distant clime the vital air:
 In rich *Theſprotia*, and the nearer bound
 310 Of *Theſſaly*, his name I heard renown'd:
 Without retinue, to that friendly shore
 Welcom'd with gifts of price, a sumless store!
 His sacrilegious train, who dar'd to prey
 On herds devoted to the God of day,
 315 Were doom'd by *Jove*, and *Phæbus*' just decree,
 To perish in the rough *Trinacrian* sea.
 To better fate the blameless Chief ordain'd,
 A floating fragment of the wreck regain'd,
 And rode the storm; 'till by the billows tost,
 320 He landed on the fair *Phæacian* coast.
 That race, who emulate the life of Gods,
 Receive him joyous to their blest abodes:
 Large gifts confer, a ready sail command,
 To speed his voyage to the *Grecian* strand.
 325 But your wife Lord, (in whose capacious soul
 High schemes of pow'r in just succession roul)

His

Book XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 221

His *Ithaca* refus'd from fav'ring Fate,
'Till copious wealth might guard his regal state.
Phedon the fact affirm'd, whose sovereign sway

330 *Theſprotian* tribes, a duteous race, obey :
And bade the Gods this added truth attest,
(While pure libations crown'd the genial feast)
That anchor'd in his port the vessels stand,
To waft the Heroe to his natal land.

35 I for *Dulichium* urge the wat'ry way,
But first the *Ulyſſean* wealth survey :
So rich the value of a store so vast
Demands the pomp of centuries to waste !

v. 327. *His Ithaca refus'd from fav'ring Fate,*
'Till copious wealth might guard his regal state.]

Ulyſſes amass'd great riches by being driven from country to country: Every Prince where he arrived made him great presents, according to the laudable customs of hospitality in former ages. The word in the *Greek* (observes *Dacier*) is ἀγυπλάζειν, it is borrow'd from beggars, who by strolling from place to place get their livelihood; and hence it was made use of simply to amass, or make collections. *Hesychius* explains it by συλλέγει, πολιζει, ἐγείρει; in which words there are two errors, and it is manifest they are corrupted: Monsieur *le Fevre* reads πλωχίζει, ἀγείρει. *Dacier*.

We may observe that *Ulyſſes* gives himself great commendations thro' this whole interview; he calls himself δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς, and says, that there were few men in the world like him; that he was θεοῖς ἰσάμενος, or like the Gods: This is not a sign of vanity or ostentation, since *Ulyſſes* speaks in the character of a stranger: He must therefore speak in the same manner as a stranger would have spoke; that is, with honour of *Ulyſſes*, to ingratiate himself with *Penelope*. Besides, this conduct conduces to persuade *Penelope*, that he is the person he pretends to be, and by the consequence contributes to prevent a discovery.

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The darling object of your royal love,
 340 Was journey'd thence to *Dodonean Jove* ;
 By the sure precept of the sylvan shrine,
 To form the conduct of his great design:
 Irresolute of soul, his state to shrowd
 In dark disguise, or come, a King avow'd ?
 345 Thus lives your Lord; nor longer doom'd to roam:
 Soon will he grace this dear paternal dome.
 By *Jove*, the source of good, supreme in pow'r!
 By the blest genius of this friendly bow'r!
 I ratific my speech; before the sun
 350 His annual longitude of heav'n shall run;
 When the pale Empress of yon' starry train
 In the next month renews her faded wane,
Ulysses will assert his rightful reign.

What thanks! what boon! reply'd the Queen, are due,
 355 When time shall prove the storied blessing true:
 My Lord's return shou'd fate no more retard,
 Envy shall sicken at thy vast reward.
 But my prophetic fears, alas! preface,
 The wounds of Destiny's relentless rage
 360 I long must weep! nor will *Ulysses* come,
 With royal gifts to send you honour'd home!—

Your

Your other task, ye menial train, forbear:
Now wash the stranger, and the bed prepare;
With splendid palls the downy fleece adorn:

365 Up-rising early with the purple morn,
His sinews shrunk with age, and stiff with toil,
In the warm bath foment with fragrant oil.
Then with *Telemachus* the social feast
Partaking free, my sole invited guest;
370 Whoe'er neglects to pay distinction due,
The breach of hospitable right may rue.

v. 363. *Now wash the stranger, &c.*] This was one of the first rites of hospitality observed towards strangers, amongst the Antients; the Scriptures abound with instances of it: *Abraham* offers water to wash the feet of the Angels whom he mistook for strangers, &c. There was also a bath for the stranger, but this seems to have been a greater honour (as *Dacier* observes) than that of washing the feet; this may be gather'd from the manner in which it was performed; the daughters of the family, even young *Princesses*, assisted at the bath; but the washing the feet was an office committed to servants: Thus the daughter of *Nestor* in the third *Odyssey* bath'd *Telemachus*, but *Ulysses* being disguis'd like a beggar, *Enryclea* washes his feet. This agrees exactly with another passage of scripture; when *David* sent to ask *Abigail* to wife, 1 Sam. xxv. 41. she made answer, *Let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord*, My memory fails me, if there be any other passage, either in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, where this practice of washing the feet is directly mention'd; the reason is, this was an office perform'd only to inferior persons; the bath was for Heroes and Kings. Now both *Homer's* Poems are fill'd with the characters of such personages, and therefore there was no room to mention it in other places: 'tis true, the word here is ἀντιλῶν, and does not necessarily imply the washing of the feet, but washing in general: yet here it is to be understood of the feet, for *Enryclea* in the act of washing them discovers this stranger to be *Ulysses*.

The vulgar of my sex I most exceed
In real fame, when most humane my deed:

And vainly to the praise of Queen aspire,

375 If stranger! I permit that mean attire,

Beneath the feastful bow'r. A narrow space

Confines the circle of our destin'd race;

'Tis ours, with good the scanty round to grace.

Those who to cruel wrong their state abuse,

380 Dreaded in life, the mutter'd curse pursues;

By death dis-rob'd of all their savage pow'rs,

Then, licens'd rage her hateful prey devours.

But he whose in-born worth his acts commend,

Of gentle soul, to human race a friend;

385 The wretched he relieves diffuse his fame,

And distant tongues extoll the patron-name.

Princess, he cry'd, in vain your bounties flow

On me, confirm'd, and obstinate in woe,

v. 376. ———— *A narrow space*

Confines the circle of our destin'd race.] The sense is here cut short, and Homer, like a good Painter, leaves something to be supply'd by the Reader's imagination. Life is short, (says *Penelope*) we ought therefore to employ it in doing good. The motive indeed which she uses, is not entirely conformable to true Theology; she here proposes glory as the sole aim of doing virtuous actions; tho' in other places *Homer* plainly asserts, that we ought to act with piety to please the Gods. *Dacier*.

When

When my lov'd *Crete* receiv'd my final view,
 390 And from my weeping eyes her cliffs withdrew;
 These tatter'd weeds (my decent robe resign'd.)
 I chose, the livery of a woful mind!
 Ngr will my heart-corroding cares abate
 With splendid palls, and canopies of state:
 395 Low-couch'd on earth, the gift of sleep I scorn,
 And catch the glances of the waking morn.
 The delicacy of your courtly train
 To wash a wretched wand'rer wou'd disdain;
 But if, in tract of long experience try'd,
 400 And sad similitude of woes ally'd,

Some

v. 399. *But if, in tract of long experience, &c.*] I will have an old woman to wash me (*says Ulysses*.) The reason of this request is not evident at first view; but *Enstathius* explains it by shewing that *Ulysses* acts thus to avoid the insults and contempt of the younger damsels of *Penelope*, who had sufficiently outrag'd him in this and the preceding book; they would think themselves degraded by performing such an office to a beggar. *Enstathius* remarks, that some antient Critics rejected three verses here: It is absurd, say they, that *Ulysses* should chuse *Enryclea* for this office, who was the only person who could discover him, and ruin his designs; he knew she was acquainted with the wound that afterwards discovers him: But the truth is, *Ulysses* knew *Enryclea* to be a person of wisdom, and he was in hopes to draw her over to his interest, and make use of her in his affairs in the future parts of the *Odyssey*; and this he does upon many important occasions, in particular in locking up the Palace at the time of the battle between him and the Suitors; so that by her means he prevents the report of that great incident from being carried to their partizans abroad: here therefore he artfully brings it about, that *Enryclea* should be assign'd to this office, not only to

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avoid

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Some wretch reluctant views aerial light,
To her mean hand assign the friendly rite.

Pleas'd with his wife reply, the Queen rejoin'd:
Such gentle manners, and so sage a mind,

405 In all who grac'd this hospitable bow'r
I ne'er discern'd, before this social hour.

Such servant as your humble choice requires,
To light receiv'd the Lord of my desires,

New from the birth: and with a mother's hand

410 His tender bloom to manly growth sustain'd:

Of matchless prudence, and a duteous mind;

Though now to life's extreme verge declin'd,

Of strength superior to the toil assign'd._____

avoid the insults of the other females, but to make use of her faithfulness and wisdom to carry on his designs, and make the way more easy to the Suitors Destruction. The choice therefore was prudent; she was aged, and acquainted with human miseries, not only by reason of her age, but had herself suffer'd in all the afflictions of *Penelope* and *Telemachus*: we find she is described as a mother to the whole family, and she all along adopts the afflictions of it: *Enstathius* therefore may perhaps be mistaken when he asserts this to be an instance of ill counsels crown'd with good success. But then it may be ask'd, if *Euryclea* was a person of such wisdom and fidelity, why does not *Ulysses* trust her with the secret of his return? The reason is plain, it would not only have been contrary to his cautious nature, but a breach of all decency to trust himself to *Euryclea*, and not to *Penelope*; this would in some measure have rais'd the character of the servant, above that of his wife and Queen. Part of this note I am indebted for to *M. Dacier*.

Rise,

Book XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 227

Rise, *Euryclon* ! with officious care

415 For the poor friend the cleansing bath prepare :

This debt his correspondent fortunes claim,

Too like *Ulysses*, and perhaps the same !

Thus old with woes my fancy paints him now !

For age untimely marks the careful brow.

420 Instant obsequious to the mild command,

Sad *Euryclon* rose : with trembling hand

She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes ;

And thus impassion'd to herself replies.

Son

v. 423. *She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes.*] *Dacier* observes that *Aristotle* in his third book of *Rhetoric* quotes this action of *Euryclon* as an instance of a *Paralogism* familiar to *Homer*; and again in his *Poetics*, he cites it to the same purpose: A *Paralogism* consists in making use of false reasoning, and drawing a false consequence from true premises: "All men, says *Aristotle*, are naturally persuaded that where such a thing is, or is done, such another must happen; we may therefore make them easily believe that if the last is, the first must consequently be; but in reality, the latter, which we lay down as truth being often false, the former is so more frequently, for it does not follow, that because one thing is, another must necessarily be; but because we are persuaded of the truth of the latter, we conclude falsely, that the former is also true." The Reader will enter into the meaning of *Aristotle*, and understand what a *Paralogism* is, by an example of it; for instance, if we were to prove a man to be in love, we bring it as an argument that he is pale: now this is a false reasoning or *paralogism*, because a person may be pale from other reasons than love. Thus in the instance of *Euryclon*, "*Homer* (says *Aristotle*) imposes upon his Reader, by mentioning a sign that is known, to draw a consequence from it, to prove a thing that is not known;" that is, *Homer* endeavours to prove that the whole story concerning *Euryclon* is true, and that she really hid her eyes when she wept, because this is a consequence

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of

228 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XIX.

Son of my love, and Monarch of my cares!

425 What pangs for thee this wretched bosom bears!

Are thus by *Jove* who constant beg his aid

With pious deed, and pure devotion, paid?

He never dar'd defraud the sacred fane,

Of perfect Hecatombs in order slain:

430 There oft implor'd his tutelary pow'r,

Long to protract the sad sepulchral hour;

That form'd for empire with paternal care,

His realm might recognize an equal heir.

O destin'd head! The pious vows are lost;

435 His God forgets him on a foreign coast!——

Perhaps,

of passion, and because it is natural for persons to conceal their eyes with their hands while they weep. This also is a Paralogism, for every syllable concerning *Euryclea* may be a fiction of the Poet, tho' such a gesture is natural to a person in her circumstances; the imposition consists in this, namely, in the art of the Poet in endeavouring to deceive us into a belief, that because persons when they weep conceal their eyes, therefore it is true that *Euryclea* thus actually wept; the latter may be evidently, tho' the former be true: *Aristotle* brings this practice of *Homer* as an example to all Poets how to tell lies as they ought, or agreeably.

v. 434

——The pious vows are lost;

His God forgets him——]

Euryclea we see is astonish'd to find that a person who is remarkable for his piety should be unfortunate; the age was not enlighten'd enough to know that calamity is often a proof of virtue, and a tryal not a punishment. *Maximus Tyrius*, the Platonic 22. dissert. excellently explains this subject: "Who (says that Author) can deny *Ulysses* to be a man of piety? *Jupiter* remembers him, *Minerva* loves him, *Mercury* guides him, *Calypso* is enamour'd

Perhaps, like thee, poor guest! in wanton pride
The rich insult him, and the young deride!
Conscious of worth revil'd, thy gen'rous mind
The friendly rite of purity declin'd;

440 My will concurring with my Queen's command,
Accept the bath from this obsequious hand.
A strong emotion shakes my anguish'd breast;
In thy whole form *Ulysses* seems express'd:

445 Of all the wretched harbour'd on our coast,
None imag'd e'er like thee my master lost.

"enamour'd with him, and *Leucothea* saves his life! Who then can deny but that Heaven try'd him with all his afflictions, that he might appear to be, and deserve to be called a good man? this is the reason why he suffer'd at *Troy*, from the Suitors, by the *Cyclops*, by *Circe*, and by shipwreck: this is the reason why he wander'd as a vagabond, and a beggar; that he was half naked, that he was struck and insulted, and suffer'd a thousand infelcencies from the riots of the Suitors: It was the favour and love of Heaven that brought him into all these afflictions, and not the anger of *Neptune*." When a good man suffers, Heav'n frequently chuses him out as an Heroe, who knows how to behave bravely in the day of adversity, and this is agreeable to true Theology.

v. 444. *In thy whole form Ulysses seems express'd, &c.*] *Homer* continually draws his reflections from the present object: *Penelope*, at the sight of this distressed and ill-cloth'd stranger, breaks out into a tender sentiment, and cries, "Perhaps my *Ulysses* is such as he!" for thus *Emstathius* applies the expression, *ἡ φύσις ἢ τὸ κακὸν*; that is, "he was not such by nature, but misfortune." But if we understand it of a bodily resemblance, the sentiment is still beautiful, and the Reader cannot without pleasure see *Penelope* deceived in comparing *Ulysses* with *Ulysses*. *Dacier*.

Thus

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- Thus half discover'd thro' the dark disguise,
 With cool composure feign'd, the Chief replies:
 You join your suffrage to the public vote;
 450 The same you think, have all beholders thought.
 He said : replenish'd from the purest springs,
 The laver strait with busy care she brings :
 In the deep vase, that shone like burnish'd gold,
 The boiling fluid temperates the cold.
 455 Mean-time revolving in his thoughtful mind
 The scar, with which his manly knee was sign'd ;
 His face averting from the crackling blaze,
 His shoulders intercept th' unfriendly rays.
 Thus cautious, in th' obscure he hop'd to fly
 460 The curious search of *Euryclea's* eye.

v. 448. ————[the Chief replies.] This is very artful in *Ulysses*: If he had deny'd the resemblance, it might have given suspicion; he therefore confesses it, and by confessing it persuades *Euryclea* that he is not the real *Ulysses*. *Dacier*.

v. 457. *His face averting from the crackling blaze.*] The reason why *Ulysses* turns toward the darkness is to avoid discovery, and that *Euryclea* might not examine him too curiously : but this is not the whole design of *Homer*; the Poet thus describes *Ulysses* to give probability to the future story; for as *Enslathins* judiciously remarks, it is from this action alone that the fainting of *Euryclea*, her laying her hand on the chin of *Ulysses*, his seizure of her throat to hinder her from discovering him, escape the notice of *Penelope*; *Ulysses* is seated out of view, and withdrawn from observation. *Dacier*.

Cautious

Cautious in vain ! nor ceas'd the dame to find
The scar, with which his manly knee was sign'd.

This

V. 461. *Cautious in vain ! nor ceas'd the dame to find
The scar*—————]

This story concerning the wound of *Ulysses*, may, I fear, in some parts of it, seem somewhat tedious; it may therefore be necessary to shew that it is introduc'd with judgment; and tho' not entirely entertaining, yet artful.

Aristotle in the eighth *Chap.* of his *Poetics*, speaking of the unity of the action of the *Odyssey*, mentions this wound of *Ulysses*. *Homer*, says he, who excell'd other Poets in all respects, seems perfectly to have known this defect, (*viz.* that all the actions of an Heroe do not constitute the unity of the action, but only such as are capable to be united with the fable) for in composing his *Odyssey*, he has not mention'd all the adventures of *Ulysses*: For example, he has not join'd the wound he received upon *Parnassus* with the account of his feign'd madness, when the *Greeks* assembled their army; for because one of them happen'd, it was neither necessary nor probable that the other should also happen; but he has insert'd all that could have respect to one and the same action. *Monsieur Dacier* fully explains *Aristotle*; We have in this precept (observes that Author) two remarkable events in the life of *Ulysses*; his feign'd madness, and his wound receiv'd upon *Parnassus*: The Poet mentions the wound, but is silent about his madness: He saw that the latter had no connexion either in truth or probability with the subject of his Poem, and therefore he says not a word of it: he has acted otherwise with respect to the wound receiv'd upon *Parnassus*; for altho' that wound was no more to the matter of his Poem, than the madness, yet he speaks of it, because he found an opportunity of inserting it so naturally into his principal action, that it becomes a necessary part of it, since it causes a remembrance of his Heroe, that is, since it is the occasion of *Euryclæa's* discovering *Ulysses*; so that this History which is here related at length is no foreign Episode, but a natural part of the subject, by being thus artfully united to it. This fully teaches us of what nature the different parts which a Poet uses to form one and the same action ought to be; namely, either necessary or probable consequences of one another, as the remembrance of *Ulysses* was of this wound: every adventure then that has not this connexion ought to be rejected as foreign, and as breaking the unity of the action: And therefore

This on *Parnassus* combating the boar,
 With glancing rage the tusky savage tore.
 565 Attended by his brave maternal race,
 His grandfire sent him to the sylvan chace,
Autolycus the bold: (a mighty name
 For spotless faith, and deeds of martial fame:

Hermes

fore *Homer* took care not to interrupt the unity of his *Odyssey*, by the Episode of the feign'd madness of *Ulysses*; for that incident could not be produc'd by any that were necessary or proper to the Poem, nor produce any that had the least relation to it.

Bossu fully agrees with *Aristotle* and *Dacier*, and gathers from this Episode that some incidents which make not directly any part of the action or the fable may be inserted into a Poem, if those incidents are necessary to clear up any part of the fable or action.

This remembrance, or discovery by the wound, is mention'd in another place; see the twenty-first *Odyssey*. *Aristotle* in his seventeenth *Chap.* of the *Poetics* prefers this remembrance to that there made to *Enmaus*; It is (observes that Author) here managed with more address and art; it is done without design, and seems a consequence of the story: There *Ulysses* himself discovers the wound; here it arises from the subject, and a series of incidents: there *Ulysses* has recourse to it, and it causes no surprize, because there is no great art in shewing a mark, which we are willing to have known. All remembrances therefore (says *Aristotle*) which produce their effects by design have little ingenuity: Whereas those which are brought about by chance, surprize us, and are instances of the Poet's art and address.

v. 467. *Autolycus the bold: (a mighty name*

For spotless faith—————]

This difficult passage is well explain'd by *Dacier* and *Enslathins*:
 The words are

—————*is ἀνδραῖρος ἐκίκατο*
Κλειφουσὶν δ' ὄρκω τε—————

I

which

Book XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 233

Hermes his Patron-god those gifts bestow'd,

470 Whose shrine with weanling lambs he wont to load.)

His

which literally run thus, " he surpass'd all men in swearing and " stealing : " a terrible character ! if it were to be understood according to the letter : It has been imagined, that *Homer* commends *Autolycus* for his address in robbery, and making equivocal oaths ; like the person (says *Eustathius*) who made a truce with his enemies for several days, and immediately went and ravag'd their territories by night, and defended it, by telling them that the truce was not made for the night but the day : or like the person mention'd by *Athenaus*, who stole a fish, and gave it to his neighbour, and being question'd about it swore, that he had it not himself, nor saw any other person steal it : but this is not the meaning of *Homer*, for he calls *Autolycus* ἱσθαλος or a good man, and adds that this κλεπτοσύνη καὶ ὄρκος, was the gift of a God. The truth is, the former word does not here signify theft, nor the latter perjury : the former signifies a laudable address in concealing our own designs, and discovering those of our enemies ; it consists in surprising them, when they least expect us, in beating up their quarters, carrying off their convoys, their provisions, and in short in all manner of stratagems, authoriz'd by the laws of war : ὄρκος signifies fidelity in observing an oath, and never violating the sanctity of it. *Plato* in his first book *de Repub.* makes it plain, that this is the sense of *Homer* : He there quotes this passage, and asserts that he is the best guardian of an army who knows how to steal the counsels and enterprises of the enemy, τὰ τῶν πολεμίων κλέψαι βέλτερά τε, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας πράξεις ; from this, it is there infer'd, that justice is a kind of chicanery (κλεπτική τις ἐπ' ἀρεταῖα φίλων, καὶ βλάβη τῶν ἐχθρῶν) by which we serve our friends, and bring detriment to our enemies ; but the answer there given to this assertion is, ἢ μὴ τὸν Διᾶ, or, by no means : It must be understood with some restriction : It is lawful to decieve an enemy in war, but in common life criminal. The qualities therefore that *Homer* commends in *Autolycus*, are his dexterity in discovering, penetrating and preventing the designs of his enemies, and the religious observance of his oaths, and not theft and perjury ; *Eustathius* explains *Homer* by adding κλεπτοσύνην ἢ κακὴν, ὄρκον ἢ φαῦλον.

v. 469. *Hermes his Patron-god those gifts bestow'd.*] The reason why *Homer* attributes these gifts to *Mercury* is, because he was the president of secrecy, or of all things that are acted with a desire

His course to *Ithaca* this Heroe sped,
 When the first product of *Laertes'* bed
 Was new disclos'd to birth: the banquet ends,
 When *Euryclæa* from the Queen descends,

475 And to his fond embrace the babe commends.

"Receive, she cries, your royal daughter's son ;

"And Name the blessing that your pray'rs have won.

a desire of concealment. He is also the God of speech, it therefore appertain'd to that Deity to guard the verity of it, in particular of oaths, being the precedent of speaking. *Dacier.*

v. 476. "Receive, she cries, your royal daughter's son, &c.] We have here an antient custom observ'd by the *Greeks*: The child was placed by the father upon the grandfather's knees, as a token that a grandchild was the most agreeable present that a son could make to a father. That this was an antient custom is evident from the *Iliad*.

—————*εὐχόμενος δ' ἱπποκλέης* 'Ερινυῶν
Μίμρῳ γένεσθι οἷσιν ἐφίσσωσθαι φίλον υἱόν
Ἐξ ἐμῶν γυνῶτα—————

That is, the father of *Phenix* imprecated the furies, that *Phenix* might never have a son to place upon his grandfather's knees.

It has been already remark'd that it was customary in *Greece* for the parents to name the child; here the grandfather names *Ulysses*: but this is done by permission of the parents, for *Autolycus* bids them give the name.

Γαμβρὸς ἐμὸς θυγάτηρ τε τίθεισ' ὄνομ'.—————

Ulysses was call'd *Ὀδυσσεύς*, from *Ὀδύσσω*, *Iraſcor*; implying (ſays *Eufſtathius*) that many hated, or were enraged at. *Autolycus*, for the miſchiefs he had done by his art in war, *ἐκ τῶ μίους διακλειπτομένην*; that is in other words, *Autolycus* call'd *Ulyſſes* *Ὀδυσσεύς* from the terror he had been to his enemies.

Then

Book XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 235

Then thus the hoary Chief. "My victor arms
"Have aw'd the realms around with dire alarms:

480 "A sure memorial of my dreaded fame
"The boy shall bear; *Ulysses* be his name!
"And when with filial love the youth shall come
"To view his mother's soil, may *Delphic* dome
"With gifts of price shall send him joyous home.

485 Lur'd with the promis'd boon, when youthful prime
Ended in man, his mother's natal clime
Ulysses sought; with fond affection dear
Amphithea's arms receiv'd the royal heir:

Anto-
lycus. Her antient * Lord an equal joy possést;

490 Instant he bade prepare the genial feast:
A steer to form the sumptuous banquet bled,
Whose stately growth five flow'ry summers fed:
His sons divide, and roast with artful care
The limbs; then all the tasteful viands share.

495 Nor ceas'd discourse (the banquet of the soul)
'Till *Phæbus* wheeling to the western goal
Resign'd the skies, and night involv'd the pole.
Their drooping eyes the slumb'rous shade oppress,
Sated they rose, and all retir'd to rest.

500 Soon as the morn, new-rob'd in purple light,
Pierc'd with her golden shafts the rear of night;

Ulysses,

236 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* Book XIX.

Ulysses, and his brave maternal race

The young *Autolyce*, assay the chase.

Parnassus, thick perplex'd with horrid shades,

505 With deep-mouth'd hounds the hunter-troop invades ;

What time the sun, from ocean's peaceful stream,

Darts o'er the lawn his horizontal beam.

The pack impatient snuff the tainted gale ;

The thorny wilds the wood-men fierce assail :

510 And foremost of the train, his cornel spear

Ulysses wav'd, to rouse the savage war.

Deep in the rough recesses of the wood,

A lofty copse, the growth of ages, stood :

Nor winter's boreal blast, nor thund'rous show'r,

515 Nor solar ray, cou'd pierce the shady bow'r,

With wither'd foliage strew'd, a heapy store !

The warm pavilion of a dreadful boar.

Rous'd by the hounds and hunters' mingling cries,

The savage from his leafy sounder flies :

520 With fiery glare his sanguine eye-balls shine,

And bristles high impale his horrid chine.

Young *Ithacus* advanc'd, defies the foe,

Poising his lifted lance in act to throw :

The savage renders vain the wound decreed,

525 And springs impetuous with opponent speed !

His

Book XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 237

His tusks oblique he aim'd the knee to goar;
 Alope they glanc'd, the finewy fibres tore,
 And bar'd the bone: *Ulysses* undismay'd,
 Soon with redoubl'd force the wound repay'd;
 530 To the right shoulder-joint the spear apply'd,
 His further flank with streaming purple dy'd:
 On earth he rush'd with agonizing pain;
 With joy, and vast surprize, th' applauding train
 View'd his enormous bulk extended on the plain.
 535 With bandage firm *Ulysses'* knee they bound;
 Then chaunting mystic lays, the closing wound
 Of sacred melody confess'd the force;
 The tides of life regain'd their azure course.

Then

v. 536. *Then chaunting mystic lays, the closing wound
 Of sacred melody confess'd the force.*

This is a remarkable instance of the antiquity of that idle superstition of curing wounds by incantation or charms: yet *Homer* is no way blameable for mentioning it; he wrote according to the opinion of the age, which whether true or false vindicates him as a Poet. Indeed almost all other Poets have spoken more boldly than *Homer* of the power of incantations; thus *Virgil*,

*Carmina vel calo possunt deducere lunam,
 Carminibus Circe socios mutavit Ulyssæi,
 Frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis.*

But we may defend *Homer* from *Pliny*, who has thought this point, viz. whether charms are available physically, worthy of a serious discussion; he refers to this passage in his natural History, lib. 28. cap. 1. *Dixit Homerus profluvium sanguinis vulnerato femine Ulyssæm inhibuisse carmine, Theophrastus, Ischiadicis sanari, Cato prodidit*

238 HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XIX.

Then back they led the youth with loud acclaim;
 540 *Antolycus*, enamour'd with his fame,
 Confirm'd the cure: and from the *Delphic* dome
 With added gifts return'd him glorious home.
 He safe at *Ithaca* with joy receiv'd,
 Relates the chace, and early praise atchiev'd.

prodidit Lunatis membris carmen auxiliari, Varro Podagris. Attilus affirms, that if a man chance to spy a scorpion, and pronounce the word *duo*, it will lie still, and never shoot his sting. I think these grave Authors outdo even the fictions of Poets; and I hardly believe that any of them would have ventur'd to provoke a serpent, trusting to the charm. But we are to understand this charm not merely as a form of words, but as join'd with musical notes, and then it may appear more rational: for the cure of the *Sciatica*, *Theophrastus* commends the *Phrygian* music, and *A. Gellius* for giving ease to it; but adds, *ut Memoria proditum est. Apollonius* in his book *de Miris* affirms from *Theophrastus*, that Music cures many diseases both of mind and body, *καθάπερ λειποθυμίας, φέβης, καὶ τὰς ἐπὶ μακρῇ γιγνομένης τῆς διανοίας ἐκείσεως, ἰάται δὲ καταύλους ἰσχιάδα καὶ ἐπιληψίαν*. And the same Author affirms, that many in his time, especially the *Thebans*, used the pipe for the cure of several sicknesses, which *Galen* calls *καταλεῖν τὴν τίπην, super loco affecto sibiā canere*; or *loca dolentia decantare*. I will not affirm that such charms of music have no power in some maladies; every one knows what an effect the harp of *David* had over the spirits of *Saul*; but we have either lost, or not yet found out the art: A natural reason may be assign'd for it, for as the musical notes move the air, so the air moves the inward spirits, and the humours of the body, which are the seat of diseases; so that by this new motion they may be condensed, rarified, dissipated or expell'd, according as they are agitated or influenc'd by the concussion of the musical notes; but however this be, if other Poets may say that charms have power to stop rivers in their courses, *Homer* is not to be condemned for ascribing the power of stopping blood to incantations. See *Mr. Cowley's Notes on the first book of his Davideis*.

Deep

545 Deep o'er his knee inseam'd, remain'd the scar:
Which noted token of the woodland war
When *Euryclea* found, the ablution ceas'd;
Down dropp'd the leg, from her slack band releas'd!
The mingled fluids from the vase redound;
550 The vase reclining floats the floor around!
Smiles dew'd with tears the pleasing strife express
Of grief, and joy, alternate in her breast.
Her flutt'ring words in melting murmurs dy'd;
At length abrupt—my son!—my King!—she cry'd.

v. 554. ———*abrupt*———*my son!*———*my King!*———*she cry'd.*]
It may seem incredible that this dialogue between *Ulysses* and *Euryclea* could be held in the presence of *Penelope*, and she not hear it: How is this to be reconciled to probability? I will answer in the words of *Enslathins*: The Poet, says he, has admirably guarded against this objection; it is for this reason that he mentions the falling of *Ulysses's* leg into the water, the found of the vessel from that accident, the overturning of it, and the effusion of the water: all these different sounds may easily be supposed to drown the voice of *Euryclea*, so as it might not be heard by *Penelope*; it is true, she could not but observe this confusion that happen'd while *Euryclea* washes; but the age of *Euryclea* might naturally make her believe that all this happen'd by accident thro' her feebleness, and *Penelope* might be persuaded that it was thus occasioned, having no reason to suspect the truth: besides, what is more frequent on the Theatre than to speak to the audience, while the persons on the stage are supposed not to hear? In reality, it is evident that *Ulysses* and *Euryclea* were at a proper distance from *Penelope*, probably out of decency while the feet were washing; for as soon as that office is over, *Homer* tells us that *Ulysses* drew nearer to the fire where *Penelope* sat, that he might resume the conference.

Αὐτίς ἀρ' ἀσπαστέρῃ πυρὸς ἔλκετο δίφρον Ὀδυσσεύς.

- 555 His neck with fond embrace infolding fast,
 Full on the Queen her raptur'd eyes she cast,
 Ardent to speak the Monarch safe restor'd:
 But studious to conceal her royal Lord,
Minerva fix'd her mind on views remote,
 560 And from the present bliss abstracts her thought.
 His hand to *Euryclen's* mouth apply'd,
 Art thou foredoom'd my pest? the Heroe cry'd:
 Thy milky founts my infant lips have drain'd;
 And have the Fates thy babbling age ordain'd
 565 To violate the life thy youth sustain'd?
 An exile have I told, with weeping eyes,
 Full twenty annual suns in distant skies:
 At length return'd, some God inspires thy breast
 To know thy King, and here I stand confess.
 570 This heav'n-discover'd truth to thee consign'd,
 Reserve, the treasure of thy inmost mind:
 Else if the Gods my vengeful arm sustain,
 And prostrate to my sword the Suitor-train;
 With their lewd mates, thy undistinguish'd age
 575 Shall bleed a victim to vindictive rage.
 Then thus rejoin'd the dame, devoid of fear:
 What words, my son, have pass'd thy lips severe?

Deep

Deep in my soul the trust shall lodge secur'd,
 With ribs of steel, and marble heart immur'd.
 580 When heav'n, auspicious to thy right avow'd,
 Shall prostrate to thy sword the Suitor-crowd;
 The deeds I'll blazon of the menial fair;
 The lewd to death devote, the virtuous spare.
 Thy aids avails me not, the Chief reply'd;
 585 My own experience shall their doom decide;
 A witness-judge precludes a long appeal:
 Suffice it thee thy Monarch to conceal.
 He said: obsequious with redoubl'd pace,
 She to the fount conveys th' exhausted vase:
 590 The bath renew'd, she ends the pleasing toil
 With plenteous unction of ambrosial oil.

Adjusting

v. 578. *Deep in my soul the trust shall lodge secur'd.*] *Plutarch* in his treatise upon *Garrulity* observes, that *Ulysses* and every person that had relation to him were remarkable for their taciturnity: they had all profited under so great a matter of secrecy as *Ulysses*: It is practis'd by his wife, his son, and his nurse; his very companions, who attended him in his voyages, possess'd this virtue in so eminent a degree as to suffer themselves to be dash'd in pieces by the *Cyclops*, rather than discover him to that giant. The moral that we are to gather from this fable is, that the safety of Princes' Counsels consists in secrecy. *Dacier.*

v. 591. *With plenteous unction*—————] We are not to imagine that this custom of anointing the feet was an instance of luxury; it prevail'd over the oriental world solely out of necessity, to avoid offensiveness in those hot regions. This custom prevail'd many ages after *Homer*, and we have an instance of it in
 VOL. IV. L the

Adjusting to his limbs the tatter'd vest,
His former seat receiv'd the stranger-guest;
Whom thus with pensive air the Queen address.

- 595 Tho' night, dissolving grief in grateful ease,
Your drooping eyes with soft oppression seize;
Awhile, reluctant to her pleasing force,
Suspend the restless hour with sweet discourse.
The day (ne'er brighten'd with a beam of joy!)
600 My menials, and domestic cares employ:
And, unattended by sincere repose,
The night afflicts my ever-wakeful woes:
When nature's hush'd beneath her brooding shade,
My echoing griefs the starry vault invade.
605 As when the months are clad in flow'ry green,
Sad *Philomel*, in bow'ry shades unseen,

To

the woman who wash'd the feet of our Lord and Saviour with tears, and anointed them with oil. This place is a plain proof that oil was used after washing the feet as well as after bathing.

v. 606. *Sad Philomel, &c.*] This passage is thus explain'd by *Eustathius*. The simile is not only introduced to express the sorrow of *Penelope*, but the nature of it: It is not so much intended to illustrate her grief, as her various agitations and different thoughts compared to the different accents in the mournful song of the nightingale; for thus *Homer* applies it.

Ὡς καὶ ἐμοὶ δάκρυ δρυμὸς ὀρώμεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.

Eustathius adds, that *Homer* relates this story very differently from later Authors: He mentions nothing of *Progne*, *Tereus*, or *Pandion*,

To vernal airs attunes her varied strains;
 And *Itylus* sounds warbling o'er the plains:
 Young *Itylus*, his parents darling joy!

610 Whom chance mis-led the mother to destroy:
 Now doom'd a wakeful bird to wail the beauteous boy.
 So in nocturnal solitude forlorn,
 A sad variety of woes I mourn!

dion, unless that name be the same with *Pandareus*; *Itylus* likewise is by them call'd *Itys*. The story is thus, according to these writers: *Philomela* was the wife of *Terens* King of *Thrace*, she had a sister nam'd *Progne*, whom *Terens* ravish'd and cut her tongue out, that she might not discover the crime to *Philomela*; but *Progne* betray'd it by weaving the story in a piece of embroidery; upon this *Philomela* slew her own son *Itys* or *Itylus*, and serv'd up his flesh to the table of her husband *Terens*; which being made known to him he pursues *Philomela* and *Progne*, who are feign'd to be chang'd into birds for their swift flight into *Athens*, by which they escap'd the revenge of *Terens*. *Philomela* is fabled to be turn'd into a nightingale, and *Progne* into a swallow; it being observed by *Pausanias*, that no swallow ever builds in *Thrace*, or nightingale is ever seen there, as hating the country of *Terens*. But *Homer* follows a different history: *Pandareus* son of *Merops* had three daughters, *Meropè*, *Cleothera*, and *Aidon*: *Pandareus* married his eldest daughter *Aidon* to *Zethus* brother of *Amphion*, mentioned in the eleventh *Odyssey*; she had an only son nam'd *Itylus*; and being envious at the numerous family of her brother-in-law *Amphion*, she resolves to murder *Amaleus* the eldest of her nephews; her own son *Itylus* was brought up with the children of *Amphion*, and lay in the same bed with this *Amaleus*. *Aidon* directs her son *Itylus* to absent himself one night from the bed, but he forgets her orders; at the time determin'd, she conveys her self into the apartment, and murders her own son *Itylus*, by mistake, instead of her nephew *Amaleus*: upon this, almost in distraction, she begs the Gods to remove her from the race of humankind, they grant her prayer, and change her into a nightingale.

My mind reflective, in a thorny maze

615 Devious, from care to care incessant strays.

Now, wav'ring doubt succeeds to long despair;

Shall I my virgin nuptial vow revere;

And joining to my son's my menial train,

Partake his councils, and assist his reign?

620 Or, since mature in manhood, he deplores

His dome dishonour'd, and exhausted stores;

Shall I, reluctant! to his will accord;

And from the Peers select the noblest Lord;

So by my choice avow'd, at length decide

625 These wasteful love-debates, a mourning bride?—

A visionary thought I'll now relate,

Illustrate, if you know, the shadow'd fate.

A team of twenty geese, (a snow-white train!)

Fed near the limpid lake with golden grain,

630 Amuse my pensive hours. The bird of *Jove*

Fierce from his mountain-eyrie downward drove;

Each fav'rite fowl he pounc'd with deathful sway,

And back triumphant wing'd his airy way.

My pitying eyes effus'd^d a plenteous stream,

635 To view their death thus imagin'd in a dream;

With tender sympathy to sooth my soul,

A troop of matrons, fancy-form'd, condole.

But

Book XIX. *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.* 245

But whilst with grief and rage my bosom burn'd,
Sudden the tyrant of the skies return'd:

640 Perch'd on the battlements he thus began,
(In form an eagle, but in voice a man.)

O Queen! no vulgar vision of the sky

I come, prophetic of approaching joy:

View in this plummy form thy victor Lord;

645 The geese (a glutton race) by thee deplor'd,
Portend the Suitors fated to my sword.

This said, the pleasing feather'd omen ceas'd.

When from the downy bands of sleep releas'd,

Fast by the limpid lake my swan-like train

650 I found, insatiate of the golden grain.

The vision self-explain'd (the Chief replies.)

Sincere reveals the sanction of the skies:

Ulysses speaks his own return decreed;

And by his sword the Suitors sure to bleed.

655 Hard is the task, and rare, the Queen rejoin'd,

Impending destinies in dreams to find:

Immur'd within the silent bow'r of *Sleep*,

Two portals firm the various phantoms keep:

Of

v. 657. *Immur'd within the silent bow'r of sleep, &c.*] This seems to be a bold fiction, and Commentators have labour'd hard to shew the reason of it: Some imagine, that by the horn is meant

Of iv'ry one; whence flit to mock the brain,
 660 Of wing'd Lies a light fantastic train:
 The gate oppos'd pellucid valves adorn,
 And columns fair incas'd with polish'd horn:

meant a tunic of the eye, which is call'd horny; and that the ivory represents the teeth; and that by these allusions the Poet intended to express that what we hear spoken may be false, but what we see must infallibly be true: that is, according to this fable, the ivory gate emits falsehood, that of horn, truth. Others explain *Homer* by referring to the nature of horn and ivory, horn being pervious to the sight, and ivory impenetrable. *Dacier*, from *Estathius*, gives us a very different solution; by horn which is transparent, *Homer* means the air, or heavens which are translucent; by ivory, he denotes the earth which is gross and opaque: Thus the dreams which come from the earth, that is, thro' the gate of ivory, are false; those from heaven, or thro' the gate of horn, true. But it may be thought that there are no grounds, from the words of *Homer*, for such an interpretation. I imagine that this fable is built upon a real foundation, and that there were places call'd the gates of falsehood and truth: *Diodorus Siculus* in his second book describing the ceremonies concerning the dead, mentions the gates of oblivion, of hatred and lamentation; and then adds, that there are other gates in the same place; namely, in *Memphis* in *Agypt*, that are called the gates of verity, near which there is a statue of justice without an head; now *Homer* in the twenty-fourth *Odyssey* places the region of dreams in the way to the infernal shades, and it is past dispute that he borrows all these fables of *Styx*, *Cocytus*, (that is, of the gates of hatred, lamentation,) &c. from *Agypt*, and places them in hell, after *Orpheus*, who adapted all his ceremonies according to the rites of burial observ'd at *Memphis*, as *Diodorus* fully proves: if therefore he borrows the fable of the gates of oblivion, &c. from *Agypt*, why may he not the story of the gates of falsehood and verity? especially since he takes his whole relation concerning hell from the customs of the *Agyptians*, and this region of dreams is placed by him in the passage to hell: It may therefore not be impossible but this story of the gates of sleep, may have a real foundation, and be built upon the customs of the *Agyptians*.

Where

Where images of truth for passage wait,
With visions manifest of future fate.

665 Not to this troop, I fear, that phantom soar'd,
Which spoke *Ulysses* to his realm restor'd;
Delusive semblance!——But my remnant life
Heav'n shall determine in a gameful strife:
With that fam'd bow *Ulysses* taught to bend.

670 For me the rival archers shall contend.
As on the lifted field he us'd to place
Six beams, oppos'd to six in equal space:
Elanc'd a-far by his unerring art,
Sure thro' six circlets flew the whizzing dart.

675 So, when the sun restores the purple day,
Their strength and skill the Suitors shall assay;
To him the spousal honour is decreed,
Who thro' the rings directs the feather'd reed.
Torn from these walls (where long the kinder pow'rs

680 With pomp and joy have wing'd my youthful hours!)
On this poor breast no dawn of bliss shall beam;
The pleasure past supplies a copious theme
For many a dreary thought, and many a dolkful dream!

Propose the sportive lot, the Chief replies,
685 Nor dread to name your self the bowyer's prize:

248 *HOMER'S ODYSSEY. Book XIX.*

Ulysses will surprize the unfinish'd game
Avow'd, and falsify the Suitors' claim.

To whom with grace serene the Queen rejoin'd:
In all thy speech what pleasing force I find!

690 O'er my suspended woe thy words prevail,
I part reluctant from the pleasing tale.
But Heav'n that knows what all terrestrials need,
Repose to night, and toil to day decreed:
Grateful vicissitude! Yet me withdrawn,
695 Wakeful to weep and watch the tardy dawn
Establish'd use enjoins; to rest and joy
Estrang'd, since dear *Ulysses* sail'd to *Troy*!
Mean-time instructed is the menial tribe
Your couch to fashion as your self prescribe.

700 Thus affable, her bow'r the Queen ascends;
The sov'reign step a beauteous train attends:
There imag'd to her soul *Ulysses* rose;
Down her pale cheek new-streaming sorrow flows:
'Till soft oblivious shade *Minerva* spread;
705 And o'er her eyes ambrosial slumber shed.

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